■ Entertainment
Ex-LVN stars race to studio for film copies

■ Business/B1
Gov't defers roadshow; peso still weak

■ Metro/A21
3 face sedition raps in QC for anti-GMA posters

■ News/A2
Bishop lines up 2 more 'pastong' witnesses

■ Sports
NBA finals: Pistons stop Spurs at home

Mobile phones ring: Hello! Hello! Garci!

By Armand N. Nocum and Jocelyn R. Uy

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GMA to visit H'Kong to show RP promise

Thursday, June 16, 2005 ■ 36 pages / vol. 28 / no. 188
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House asks GMA: Comment on tape

Respect GMA silence, Bunye tells people

By Cid Calderon Jr., Marlon Ramos and Juliet Labog-Javellana

Lawmakers OK joint probe of 5 committees

By Philip C. Tubeo and Michael Lim Ubac

A STUDENT sign-bearer seen on a poster of "Youth Power Against Dictatorship-Now" (YPAD), an organization of student councils in Metro Manila. YPAD denounces attempts by "power-hungry leaders" to weaken people's trust in government but says the President must explain.

Military welcomes spy probe

By Dona Pazybayan and Michael Lim Ubac

NBI charges Ong with inciting to sedition

By Armand N. Nocum

DEMONSTRATORS at a militant group hold copies of an alleged wiretapped telephone conversation purportedly showing widows of sedition climaxing in a protest in front of the MTC building in Quezon City.

PA. QUIRINO Elementary School, the oldest public school in the Philippines, is surrounded by friends and relatives as it is demolished.

Father Lolo dies amid turmoil

By Christine V. Esguerra

TALE OF THE TAPE

Kidnapping tied to poll fraud

By Ed Zamora

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2005

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Bishop lines up 2 more witnesses

By Christine F. Esguerra

LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN Archbishop Oscar Cruz yesterday said he would present two more witnesses when the Senate resumes its "jueteng" hearings next week.

Cruz said one of the witnesses, a male, is expected to "corroborate" the previous testimonies of four other witnesses earlier presented before the Senate.

"We will consolidate and confirm the testimonies," the ensuing prelate told reporters. Cruz refused to say if the new witness was also a former gambling operator like Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor. He also declined to reveal details about the other witness, also a male.

He said the other witness knew the four others and has dealt with them on several occasions in a region considered a hotbed of jueteng.

Cruz refused to say if the witness would accomplish any officials of the government.

Representatives Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo of Pampanga and Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo of Negros Occidental were both implicated by witness Sandra Cam.

"Let's just say that he knows a lot and he knows about the things that the other witnesses have told the Senate," he said.

Cam, one of at least eight witnesses under the bishop's protection, had earlier admitted withholding and delivering money for retired police general Jeanette Mosqueda, erstwhile Bicol regional director.

She claimed to have personally delivered passing money to the two Arroyos right at the House of Representatives.

Witness' confirmation

Cruz said his new witness who listened to the testimonies of the earlier witnesses confirmed to him that Cam and company were telling the truth. He had purposefully been involved, in one way or another, in the circumstances the witnesses had divulged to senators.

As this developed, House leaders led by Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Assistant Majority Leader Antonio Cuenco agreed with Arroyo that Arroyo belongs that a congressional investigation must always be conducted in aid of legislation and not to file criminal charges that partisan politics may turn the proceedings into a tool for destabilization.

In an earlier statement, Arroyo cited that in a past investigation by the House committee on good government, which he chaired, the House adopted a bill banning Arroyo in relation to the Hanseltall case and subsequently dismissed.

Reputable counsel

Arroyo said those included the hiring of a reputable counsel of integrity and competence to help the committee screen witnesses who offer or are subjected to testify, the holding of an executive session first in case testimony or evidence may undesirably harmful to a person's reputation, and subsidizing of a public hearing if a piece of evidence is not corroborated by some other evidence, the holding of a public hearing if the evidence is justified, and giving the defendant a chance to reply at the earliest opportunity after the witness testified against a person.

Meanwhile, the counsel of Mike Arroyo yesterday said new libel charges will be filed against Cam after she revealed on television the said night that payola to Arroyo and his uncle Ignacio Arroyo had tried to bribe her to withdraw her testimony in the Senate.

In a statement, lawyer Grace Mariano-Montemayor said they were now getting a tape of the episode of MIG-CDN's show "Pipol" which featured Ms Cam.

"After we review the tape and get an exact transcription of her own false and malicious imputations against Congressman Arroyo, we will be filing a frank counter of criminal libel against Ms Cam," said Mariano-Montemayor.

Arroyo earlier filed a P5 million libel suit against Cam for her claim that both Arroyo congressmen had received jueteng payola.

CHARM OFFENSIVE

President Macapagal-Arroyo exchanges pleasantries with El Shaddai leader Brother Mike Velarde during yesterday's inauguration of the newly constructed Mayor Arsenio Castillo Coliseum at the Carmelo Homes Subdivision City in Molino, Bacoor, Cavite. The event was also attended by Trade Secretary Juan Santos and Bacoor Mayor Jesse Carrillo. The President sought the support of the religious, particularly the El Shaddai, as the time when she and her family is being battered by scandals involving "jueteng" payola and election fraud.

PRIVATE CITIZEN

Garcillano stripped of immunity

By Jerome Aning

UPHELD reappointed to the Commission on Elections, Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano would lose his constitutional immunity and will be treated as a private citizen in possible investigations into his alleged involvement in rig the 2004 poll results.

This was the assessment of Commissioner Florentino Tuason, when asked yesterday by reporters about the prospects of the election office to probe Garcillano.

Tuason said the proceedings to be instituted against Garcillano would be administrative in nature and would only be possible as long as his colleagues remain a member of the Comelec.

"He will be investigated with regards to related conduct but we don't know yet if he was reappointed," Tuason explained, adding that Garcillano's fate in the commission rests with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr., on the other hand, asked the public not to condemn the commission's officers.

"Reminding that it is Gen. the Comelec should not be condemned," Abalos said. "The alleged act is by one commissioner alone. The Comelec is not the voice of one person."

According to Abalos, the investigations of Garcillano would begin once the National Telecommunications Commission completes its study of the controversial wiretapped conversation and determines its authenticity and the identities of the persons in the audiotape.

Tuason said the controversy was "disheartening." "We never expected something like this," he added.

Garcillano's ad interim appointment as the commissioner expired last Friday and technically had lost his position, having since bypassed seven times by the Commission on Appointments.

The commissioner has stopped reporting for work since the start of this week.

If not reappointed by the President, Garcillano would lose his status as a constitutional official and could be subpoenaed to hearings in Congress. He would also lose his privilege of being removed from office only through impeachment since found guilty by Congress of charges such as violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust, among others.

Tuason declined to state what measures might be enacted on Garcillano if the latter would be found guilty of misdemeanor by the Comelec.

Between wars, Marines turn to buko pies, smoked fish

By Julie S. Alipala,
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PANANG, Indo.—They usually trained to battle plan and smoked fish as a hobby only to realize that they could actually make money from it.

The Indo Cyprus economic pies and smoked fish produced by members of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 4 here have not only become profitable, with the market for them growing by the day. They have also had a positive effect on the Marines' peacemaking efforts in the area.

According to Lt. Col. Rudy Inkiso, MBLT 4 commander, limited the skills to bake pies and make smoked fish from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) about two years ago.

Initially, the men only wanted to baking to increase their supply of food, particularly snacks, as there were hardly any and not stores near their positions in Barangay Bubuagsan here in Pikit town.

"Security-wise, also an issue because soldiers could not simply go to Ando to buy what they wanted because they would be considered encroachers," Inkiso said.

The abundance of coconuts in the area also then newly acquired skills inspired the soldiers to produce an inexpensive snack. He bake pie "is a Lapu-Lapu pride."

They began by baking about three or four pies using young coconut, cassava and milk, all purpose flour and sugar.

"It tasted good, so we baked several more trays and shared our product with other unit and barangay officials," Inkiso said.

When Bubuagsan mayor Simeon Indiran learned about the soldiers' pie-making skills, he ordered several trays of the pies.

"And I liked the taste, besides it is local," Mayor said. I told it a quality control standard for food prescribed by Islamic religious tradition.

Based alone the bake pie spread and soon the products were being shared with villagers and other Marine units.

Lt. Col. Generoso Mariano of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 5 said they have also created other kinds of pies that MBLTs makes.

"It depends to its amount, you'll get the chance to savor the moist buko durian pie," said Mariano.

Col. Jaime Saldua, chief of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said villagers wanted to learn Tesda-pie making and asked the soldiers to share the technique.

"The villagers produced many fresh based products and what our troops did was to transfer their skills to villagers," Saldua said.

By October 2004, there were so many villagers wanting to learn buko pie-making that the Marines decided to open the Bubuagsan Skills Institute.

From buko pie making, the institute eventually also awarded fish and hollow blocks production.

Inkiso said the market and demand for the soldiers' products "really increased."

OFWs warned vs text raffle scam

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday warned overseas Filipino workers and their families not to believe in text messages purportedly claiming that they have won P2 million in a Tampke festival ng Pilipinas' electronic raffle draw for OFWs.

The scam was brought to the attention of the DFA by a staffer of the Philippine Embassy in Egypt.

The DFA said the scam works this way. A potential OFW victim receives a message announcing that he or she has won the lucky prize and was told to the money from "DFO Director Rafael Buenaventura" himself in telephone no. "09151 6567234."

Once the supposed "winner" calls that number, a male voice—one of three scammers—will ask the caller to disconnect the number. The second call will be answered by another male who will then request that they remit from P60 "remit" KKKO to the Philippines through Western Union Money Transfer before the prize can be claimed.

Jeanne Ibañez, a communications officer of the Philippine Embassy in Cairo, received one such message on media age.

Ibañez followed the instructions in the text message and was attended to, as the love talk he was said to make, by different males who did not give their names. The second male even encouraged her to "validate" the price by giving the alleged phone number of the president of Western Union Philippines, Rolf Gonzalez.

Palace raises new alarm on bird flu

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG yesterday raised anew the alarm bells on bird flu spreading in the Southeast Asian region.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the threat of the Avian flu should not be taken lightly because it could wipe out the P120 billion-a-year poultry industry and leave the enormous pool of endangered species of birds, including the Philippine eagle.

"Against a unwrapped tape on a 'farming' scandal that may sound harsh, but I think we consider this is a killer virus for the poultry industry," Yap said in a briefing in Malacañang.

The World Health Organization has warned that an outbreak of bird flu pose as a serious threat in Southeast Asia. It has so far killed at least 54 people and has infected millions of chickens.

Avian flu was believed to have infected birds only until it jumped the species barrier for the first time in Hong Kong eight years ago.

Migratory birds are suspected carriers of the virus called A-strip Tajosaki. Bio-governments has put under close watch 46 roosting birds and wintering birds in Davao, Batangas, Pagsanjan, Basra Mater Agusi, Cagayan, Olango Island, Cebu, Negros Occidental, Isabela, Caraga, Agusan del Norte, Antique province, Samar Island, Tawitawi, Gen. Santos City, Catanduanes and Masbate.

"We're very critical about watching those our because when they some used their effect an area like Davao's Municipality Park, the Philippine eagle may have to be transported out," Yap said.

Yap said the government must keep up with the seriously that it had put up a P 500-million fund to set up precautionary measures similar to the ones adopted for the SARS virus a few years ago.

"We are also putting under watch here the country's ports for smuggling of fresh poultry products from countries with Avian flu such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Thailand and indonesia, Pakistan, Laos, South Africa, North Korea, and Malaysia" said Yap.

Laya; 75

MRS. PILAR Indon Laya of Iligan City died on June 9 in San Jose, California, USA, at the age of 75.

She is survived by her husband, lawyer Salvador Linth Laya, children Frankie, Marilag, Tommy, Cindy, Cristie, Marivic, Ruben, and Jonathan, in-laws, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains will arrive on Sunday, June 19, at 9 a.m. in Cagayan de Oro City and will lie in the family residence in Iligan City.

The deceased and her husband were en route to Chicago where they were to attend a Rotary convention on June 18.

Interment will be on Wednesday at St. Michael's Mission in the Father the Pa in. Blessed St. Michael's Cathedral.

Indon MP receives 2 freed hostages

ZAMBOANGA, City — Two Indonesian hostages rescued by Philippine troops from Muslim Abu Sayyaf rebels were turned over to Indonesian officials in the southern Philippines yesterday.

Tamrin Labuso and Erikson Tiranggal were rescued Sunday after elite forces stormed an Abu Sayyaf lair in Jolo. A third hostage, Ahmad Rantisi, remains hospitalized but is believed still to be alive.

The three were seized by pirates in March after their boat was attacked off the coast of Malaysia's Sabah state. They were then turned over to Abu Sayyaf rebels and were kept in jungle hideouts in Jolo.

Medical checks

The Cabalo were presented to Indonesian member of parliament Jacob Effendi Hadibie, still nursing their hospital gowns. They have been undergoing medical checks since they were freed Sunday.

Hadibie said Indonesian authorities were working closely with their Philippine counterparts in trying to get after the Abu Sayyaf. He did not give specific details.

"They are not out, not totally. We are helping [but] there [could be no mercy from us," Hadibie said through an interpreter.

The men are to be flown back to Indonesia on Saturday, he said. AFP

Indonesian president due Monday

INDONESIAN President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono will be in Manila on Monday for a three-day state visit.

On the same day, President Tokyo Ai Jammeh of the Republic of Gambia will also arrive for a four-day visit.

Yudhoyono is arriving via a special flight on June 20 at around 4 p.m. and will be welcomed at the Villamor Air Base. He leaves Manila in the morning of June 22.

State visit

His predecessor, Megawati Soekarnoputri made her state visit to Manila in August 2001. President Jammeh's last visit to Jakarta was during the Non-Aligned Movement held last April.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Indonesian Embassy have yet to give details of Yudhoyono's stay.

Indonesia and the Philippines forged diplomatic relations in 1949. The post-9/11 era saw the two Southeast Asian neighbors share a common tag as home to armed groups which the United States government says have links with the Al Qaeda terrorist network. Yuli Guerrero

ARTIST Sulian Mangosan wields goggles and magnifying glass to give painstaking a new twist by burning small dots on a wooden "canvas."

Artists' village showcases Cordillera culture

BAGUIO CITY—On a rare drizzle-free day in the mountains, self-taught artist Sulian Mangosan dons blacked-out welder's goggles and begins to paint, using a magnifying glass to make the sun in Sun's sky image on a wooden plank.

Giving French impressionist Georges Seurat's pointillism — using small dots to create an image — a new twist, this long-haired Mangosan, 38, takes up to eight months to complete his "solar painting" of rice fields on terraced plots wrapped around mountainsides.

He is one of the artists who ply their trades in Tam-awan, a 2.5-hectare (6.2-acre) art center located in a former cattle pasture on the edge of Baguio City. It was set up several years ago as a showcase of the Cordillera mountain region's cultural heritage.

"I came here a few days ago and they welcomed me," says Tim Lever, a British professor of English based in South Korea who also dabbles in the arts. He rented one of the century-old wood-and-cane Igorot tribal huts (some that dominate the hills) landscape for P500 a night.

Vanishing way of life

"They let me have a whole cabin to myself all day, where I can create and make a little music," he tells AFP, sitting on a carved table at the Tam-awan souvenir shop as he doodles paint to prevent mosquito bites.

The artists' village was set up in 1997 by local painter Ben Cabrera and his friends, who restored a place to enhance some abandoned Igorot huts in Ifugao and Kalinga provinces as part of an undertaking to preserve the vanishing way of life of the mountain peoples of the northern Philippines.

One of the houses is a 187-old Ifugao "bridlily" hut where, in previous generations, prospective Igorot couples actually used to have sex prior to marriage to ensure both partners were fertile.

If sex was important, the guest was free to get another mate.

Some of the huts now serve as exhibition galleries. On display last month were the works of Mangosan's older brother, Jordan Mangosan, the last living exponent of the magnifying glass-wielding artistic trend.

"One glass takes me six to eight months, depending on the weather," says Emerald Martinez, an aspiring poet who serves as the village's manager.

Burning wood

"You have to wait for the right time — it's not just the regular sunny day — and then you burn on the wood. You can also burn on handmade paper or canvas," he says.

When the artist wants to paint at night he has the option of using a soldering gun.

Either way, "putting in the details takes great care. Once you make a mistake then that's it", Mangosan adds.

Hanging off a tree branch at the square stalls of the village is a giant, Buddhism-inspired spider web-shaped installation by local artist John Frank Salado made of rope, glass and wood. Called "The Dream Catcher," it is supposed to protect sleepers from nightmares.

From a quality curiosity, the place soon attracts hundreds of paying visitors a week, making it self-sustaining. Artists hang out to do portraits of visitors or exhibit and sell their work, for which the village gets commission fees. Room rentals, entrance tickets, and coffee shop receipts provide revenue for the village.

Tam-awan may soon find an influx of many overseas visitors as it is set inclusion in the next Philippine edition of the popular Lonely Planet travel guide.

Eschewing the hoi, some guests pitch tents on the ridgetop, where on a clear day the shimmering waters of the South China Sea are visible, some 60 kilometers to the northwest.

Different strokes

Grade schoolers and boy scouts around the region make educational trips to the village. Some couples use the place to exchange marriage vows and families have hosted reunions.

A stages performance art on the stone courtyard outside the auditorium, one of five Tam-awan in the area, is open to exhibit every three weeks, with the output of a well-travelled South Korean photographer Mun Jae-Mook currently on display.

The village holds regular workshops in paper and print-making, textile art, pottery and other media as well as traditional Igorot crafts such as basket-weaving and making wine using fermented rice.

"They've probably gotten used to it now," Mariano says of the neighbors. "At last electricity hasn't failed for three because before, the road was not paved," she adds. The paving has raised property values in Baguio's Pinsao district.

Lever, the British guest, says the place reminds him of a similar center in western India that has served as an artists' haven for about 50 years.

Whatever one's inclination for art as a passe-part-art-street, called "Tatang-tibal.

Understandably, the place is not to everyone's taste.

"You have to be a bit crazy to appreciate what they are doing up there," says Patrick Dionisio, a government employee of the local office of the agriculture department. AFP

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Lifestyles

Police on defense mode vs NPA

By Lopa A. del Puerto

THE POLICE yesterday went into "defense mode" following a series of ambushes of and attacks on government forces in Luzon by NPAK guerrillas.

Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao ordered all field commanders to beef up security and mount a consolidated defense with nearby military units.

According to PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, the police expect more rebel offensives in the coming days.

He said communist rebels were taking advantage of the scandals and controversies, including rumors of dissidence, now besetting the government.

"We expected that indeed they would take advantage of this situation. [But] we will not allow these armed elements to harass or even take over our stations or municipal government or building without resistance from the military and police," Bataoil said.

Bataoil said all regional commands have been ordered to go into "active defense" after a series of encounters with armed elements of the New People's Army in Southern Luzon, and RAM (Reformist-Standing Halthing Bayan) in Central Luzon, and in parts of the Visayas and Mindanao.

Under this defense system, provincial and regional mobile groups, the PNP's reaction teams, must augment government troops in Pro-flaring areas.

Bataoil said field commanders must be able to preserve or withdrawal their forces, and go after the attackers.

He said the PNP was also keeping tabs on organized crime groups as well.

"We don't think that they will be able to regroup and take advantage of the situation by way of conducting kidnap-for-ransom activities or bank robberies," Bataoil said.

On June 13, nine soldiers were ambushed and killed by the NPA in Barangay Malaya, Gen vander, Davao Sur.

The day before, an ERR suspect died while three of his companions were captured during an encounter on the Olongapo-Gapan road in Barangay Sapang, Dinalupihan, Bataan. Another ERR member was wounded in that encounter.

That same day, 12 ERR members were killed in a 41-hour firefight in Barangay San Nicolas, Mexico, Pampanga.

On June 3, a village official and a student were killed while eight others were wounded when more than 50 NPA members overran an Army outpost in Tiempo Shorter, Tubo, Abra. The NPA sonde-off with 29 rifles

LOMIBAO

Resettled squatters get break from suppliers

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE HOUSING and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) has allowed resettlement families to buy construction materials for their new homes from the suppliers of their choice.

Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of HUDCC, said his office had received complaints from residents affected by the relocation operations, who claimed that prices quoted for assembled supplies were way above the costs quoted by independent suppliers.

Badly hurt by the project is given a loan of P40,000 for buying materials as part of the resettlement package. The loan is interest-free and payable in 20 years.

De Castro said the loan would instead be given directly to the beneficiaries so they could buy from other suppliers.

"I've heard numerous complaints regarding this so it would be better to change the procedure to ensure transparent and speedy relocation of the families," De Castro said.

The HUDCC chair said loans would be released in four tranches of P10,000 to ensure that they will be used for housing materials. The beneficiaries would be required to present receipts for the housing materials to receive the next tranche.

De Castro said he immediately ordered a change in the policy after hearing the complaints during his visit yesterday to the resettlement sites in Bagumbayan and Bulungan, Malabon.

"The government wants to grant shelter security to the informal settlers of North Rail while the modernize railway system in Luzon," De Castro said. "We will act immediately on complaints like this one in order to facilitate the process."

Big-ticket project

The 32.2-kilometer railway transit project, which will link Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Northern Luzon, is the biggest project between the Philippines and China.

The train will run from Caloocan City through Malolos in Bulacan, Clark Field in Pampanga, Tarlac in Pangasinan all the way to San Fernando City in La Union.

At least 30 four-car diesel trains will run through the existing track of the Philippine National Railways, which later will be converted into modern double-tracks.

About P20.5 billion of the total project cost will be funded through a loan from the Export Import Bank of China while the remaining P5.4 billion will come from the North Luzon Railway Corp., the local counterpart of the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. that will construct the first phase of the railway.

The Chinese construction firm will undertake the first section of the North Rail's phase one covering Caloocan City up to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark Field.

The rail line will run through six stations namely: Caloocan, Valenzuela, Malolos, Bocaue, Guiguinto and Malolos. The depot will be in Malolos City.

Travel time between Caloocan and Malolos will be shortened to 32 minutes and the train service is expected to cover at least 45,000 passengers a day.

After the completion of the Caloocan-Dalla-Fine, phase two will be a branch line to Subic Freeport Zone while phase three will link Caloocan City to Fort Bonifacio in Makati City. Phase four will be an extension to San Fernando, La Union.

Ban on travel to Iraq stays

By Jerome Aning

THE BAN on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Iraq remains, especially with the rising number of bombings there, a Foreign Affairs official said yesterday.

"We will not lift the ban because of the increase in incidents of bombings. The ban is consistent to earlier orders, but right now, the review indicates the wisdom of the ban," undersecretary for migrant workers affairs Jose Brillantes said.

Brillantes said the DFA's office for Filipinos in Iraq – whether staying legally or illegally – is voluntary go-home-call system.

The official said as of their last count, some 4,000 documented OFWs were deployed in Iraq. He added that the department did not know how many Filipinos in Iraq were undocumented because "we don't know where they are."

Unofficial reports vary on the number of undocumented Filipinos in Iraq, with estimates ranging from 800 to 2,000. If accurate, said agency officials is to be believed, OFWs could have to go to Iraq using third countries as jumpoff points with the collusion of unscrupulous local placement firms and recruitment authorities.

According to Brillantes, embassy staff in Iraq continues to scour the strife-torn country for undocumented Filipinos.

DepEd chief given oversight powers over CHEd

ABAD

By Alcuin Papa

EDUCATION Secretary Florencio Abad has been given oversight powers over the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), an agency under the Office of the President.

Executive Order No. 434, dated June 7, 2005 and released yesterday, stated that the President's picture "to exercise policy oversight" over the CHED was hereby delegated to the Secretary of Education.

The President's directive also repeals all executive issuances, rules and regulations found to be inconsistent with the provisions of EO No. 434, which takes effect on June 8.

According to the order, Abad would be the President's office representative to the CHED but the agency would not fall administratively under the DepEd.

The CHED, which is headed by chair Ic Carlito Puno, was created by Republic Act No. 7722, or the Higher Education Act of 1994.

The law states that the CHED should be "independent and separate" from the Department of Education and "attached to the Office of the President for administrative purposes only."

The Palace justified the order on the basis of the President's power to "control the powers and control of all executive department, bureaus and offices, and her authority to reorganize the administrative structure of the Office of the President.

A CHED official said the President's delegation of her policy oversight powers to Abad was the culmination of her loss of trust and confidence in the commission, particularly with regard to issues "concerning the private school sector, like the cap on tuition increases and the quality of education."

"The order is a solemn call to the commission to lead commissioners to meet standards to improve higher education and not to restrict private schools with counter-productive policies," said CHED executive director Julito Alfonso.

The CHED has been overseeing complaints from students and administrators of private schools about tuition policies.

"The perception is that the commissioners and the commissioner's staff get their act together to handle all the problems. The intent is that there is unity, more because of the (CHED's) politics with politicos always complaining of unreasonable policies," Tin Isla said.

Nicolas, who has been with CHED for the past 11 years, said this was the first time that the Office of the President had delegated its oversight function over the commission to another agency.

He said the President probably chose to put someone she could trust to cut the CHED in order, with Abad acting as point of troubleshooter.

The CHED has also come under scrutiny early this year when it went after substandard private nursing schools which have been unable to produce graduates capable of passing the licensure exams.

Last month, licensee CHED Chair Fe Hidalgo de la Rosa resigned allegedly because of pressure from lawmakers and private-school owners.

Recently, the CHED ordered all colleges and universities to peg their tuition hikes to the inflation rate of 6.3 percent. Any school wishing to raise tuition above the inflation rate has to justify the increase before the commission, the CHED said.

The CHED also came under fire recently from militant student groups which said that some schools were defying the CHED order and that tuition increases were the highest in recent years at 11-15 percent.

Nicolas said private schools should be allowed to grow and develop.

"Policy-making with regard to private schools should be balanced because we recognize the role they play," he said.

He said "wide holders" in private educational institutions, administrators and students should be consulted on policies, as mandated by law.

Abad, who is now in Japan on official business, will be meeting with Puno as soon as he returns to office on the terms of reference and implementation of the President's order.

Clan wars threaten ceasefire in South

PAGE A2

Dayrit assumes lofty WHO post

By Christine V. Esguerra

TWO MONTHS after being sworn in as Health Secretary, Manuel Dayrit is set to become the highest-ranking Filipino official ever in the World Health Organization (WHO).

Dayrit has been appointed director of human resources for the WHO's Western Pacific region.

Starting Aug. 1, he will be based in Geneva office to supervise policies on the condition of health professionals in countries worldwide.

Dayrit said his appointment will be good for at least two years.

He said he was formally offered the position on May 15, six days after Malacañang announced that he would be replaced by a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo — Francisco Duque III. Dayrit got his appointment last Monday.

With the new post, he said, he would have to resign from the Commission on Social Determinants for Health, another key issue he has been on the past seven years.

"This will be an entirely new challenge to me," he told the Inquirer yesterday.

Dayrit said he had been offered the job, apparently because of his experience at the Department of Health where he had served for at least three years.

DAYRIT

There he was widely acknowledged for combating the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome virus that threatened to spread in the country, and for bringing low-cost medicines to the country-side, among other projects.

But he gave a mixed review from Church leaders and pro-life advocates when he launched the "Lingap Buntis" reproductive health program last February.

The program was seen as part of an unfounded government effort to control the population primarily through artificial methods. Dayrit later admitted that he himself preferred natural birth control.

As WHO director for human resources, Dayrit said he would be tasked to help set up an institute such as the "brain drain" involving health workers in countries like the Philippines.

Drive to stop medical exodus launched

By Leila B. Salaverria

HEALTH experts have begun implementing measures to stem the exodus of doctors and nurses, including luring medical students to a special program at the University of the Philippines-Manila, sign a contract requiring them to work in the country for a certain number of years.

Dr. Aimee Gabriel Tan suggested, among other things, the compulsory service of health workers before they would be allowed to go abroad and the forging of bilateral and mutually beneficial agreements with countries exporting Filipino health workers.

Cecilia Tanco, dean of UP Manila's College of Medicine, said the students admitted this year to the school's Pagsasanayan Program in Medicine and Allied Sciences (PPMAS) is a scheme that stipulates they should work in the country the same number of years they studied at the college.

"This is the first time we made the students sign [oath of contract]. Before, under the BS [the curriculum name of a school], most of the students did not return to their provinces. 'Ide naamoy ra mangibaw si.' Tanco said in an interview yesterday.

The contract is called Annotation to Serve and Assumption of Liabilities, or ASAL. After completing the contract, the graduate is free to work anywhere. Those who violate the terms of the contract would be made to pay for their tuition, since the fees at UP are subsidized by the government. A course in the College of Medicine usually lasts five years.

Marketing Institute of the Philippines
The Education and Training Arm of the
PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION
presents a seminar on:

BRAND MANAGEMENT

June 21, 22 & 23, 2005
(Monday, Tuesday & Thursday)
1:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati

The concept of brand management has gone into an evolutionary process ever since it was introduced by Procter & Gamble in 1931. Several modifications/ concepts introduced but there were revisions at various stages and this concept has been modified to adapt to the individual company's marketing environment and competitive scenario. This seminar will provide the participants with the essential working skills required in this brand management job.

Target Participants
This seminar is suited for new recruits in the brand management job or those who want to step into the challenging role of brand management. Managers coming from brand related field viz. sales, advertising, promotions, media and public relations as well as undergraduates or recently handling a brand management course will likewise benefit from this seminar.

Seminar Objectives
At the end of the seminar on Brand Management, participants will learn:
The key essentials of the brand management functions. The following key functional areas will be dealt comprehensively: An introduction to Brand Management, Labeling the Brand Personality, Brand Strategies that lead to Success, Understanding Brand Research and Benchmarking and Managing Brands Over Time.

Methodology
Lectures, exercises, plus the brand marketing plan project will apply participants with the right job orientation. Hands-on practitioners demolition are to share pragmatic insights about brand management.

REGISTRATION FEES
Non-Member Php 5,000.00
Member Php 4,000.00

Registration fees are exclusive of seminar manual, identification card and meals.
Cut-off date of registration will be given to those who will attend at least 75% of the sessions.
Cancellations of any reservations must be communicated before the seminar, in written letter.
Please make check payable to the PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION, INC.

For inquiries, please call up the
Philippine Marketing Association Secretariat
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e-mail: lydiamartinez@ateneo.edu

SEMINAR PROGRAM
Day 1 – June 27, 2005 (Monday)
Introductory Session: 1:00 – 1:30 pm
Session Chair: MR. ARMANDO AC AC
Professor, San Beda College, Graduate School

Session 1 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Introduction to Brand Management
Defines the context of strategic brand management by allowing the participants through a historical review a learning by defining what it meant to early brands owners. Looks at how the branded asset value customer-based brand equity is all about.
Speaker: DR. LEONARDO R. GARCIA, JR.
Dean, School of Professional & Continuing Education
DE LA SALLE-COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

Session 2 – 3:45 – 5:45 pm
Understanding Brand Research and Measurement
Exposes the participants to multiple marketing research measures that can help brand managers understand what is happening to their brands.
Speaker: MR. RENATO C. DE VERA
Consultant, GFK
Certified International Trainer, Singapore

BRIEFING FOR FINAL PROJECT – 5:45 – 6:00 pm

Day 2 – June 28, 2005 (Tuesday)
END OF SESSION – 3:00 – 3:30 PM

Session 3 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Brand Personality and The Brand Personality
One important aspect of the brand is its personality as reflected in the associations that consumers hold toward the brand.
Speaker: DR. RAMON O. DE VEGA
Marketing Director
DE LA SALLE-COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

Session 4 – 3:45 – 5:45 pm
Brand Strategies That Lead to Success
This session provides the participants with insights on how best to design branding strategies.
Speaker: MR. JON G. ALCANTARA
Vice President, Marketing
ASIA BREWERY INC.

BRIEFING – 5:30 – 6:15 pm

Day 3 – June 30, 2005 Thursday
END OF SESSION – 3:00 – 3:30pm

Session 5 – 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Revitalizing and Managing Brand Over Time
One of the challenges in managing brands is the many changes that occur in the marketing environment.
Speaker: MS. MA. TERESA V. CAMACAMBAL
Senior Executive Officer
ANDREAS MUSIC

PRESENTATION OF CLASS NOMINATION – 3:45 – 6:15 pm

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 16, 2005
1 Cdo 16b-c to Ordinary Time
1st Reading: 2 Cor 11:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 6:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they imagine that they will be heard because of their many use of long words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

"This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven,
help be your name,
your kingdom come
and your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the food we need.
Forgive us our debts
just as we have forgiven those who owe us debts to us.
Do not bring us to the test
but free us from the evil one.
"If you forgive other men their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either."

Comment on:
And how are we to pray — in Jesus' words, then repeating them mindless as prayer-mats and magpies or like a world beyond our mind [God] who knows what we need? What can we pray for — this, the home of God, God's will, God's kingdom and the way it comes upon our earth as on, as in heaven, others' bonds established needs, forgiveness of others and ourselves, the test, the evil one? Especially forgiveness — wiping of others' debts, all owed Father really in the line of the covenant debt our God has released us from with such mercy that Father makes us those who are to be forgiven, generously [maybe only] as God may [— for that is the only holiness you really need] here on, along with the shaking of all that you have given to us among your children, our brothers and sisters next to us and it's really here on earth as in heaven, the first words that Father we 'can' also hold's every step and motion in the world with such care and tender regard, concerned personally what happens in every one of them, and what needs to all who make up our lives. — JMM

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Kapatiran: Building character

FORMING an "enlightened, united and responsible citizenry" from which servant leaders will emerge and "building a culture of character" topped the list of objectives presented by the Kapatiran sa Pangkalahatang Kalusugan (KPK) to the officers and members of the Sr. Thomas More and Associates (STMA), the socio-political arm of the Congress for Christ, at Club Filipino recently.

KPK president Johnny Cardenas, in a press statement, said "KPK hopes to achieve these objectives through character building, values formation, conducive ethic of life, love of country and basic political education to empower the rich, poor and all organizations interested in pursuing these objectives."

STMA officialdom at its main function, KPK said it is a "communitarian, nonviolent, synchlik and national political movement for the restoration of the dignity of man."

It was KPK, the political movement, that gave birth to a new political party called the Alliance for the Common Good, of Atty Eraquinto, for short. The Commission on Elections accredited the Ang Kapatiran as a registered political party on May 3, 2004.

KPK was represented by Ann Tolo, chair of the Sr. Thomas More and Associates, who pointed the objectives of the movement and opened the possibility of a merger between STMA and KPK on certain specific projects that may benefit, for instance, the disabled throughout the country.

Corrections

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, the news-feature story on Page B1 of the Business section should have read 31.27% — not 54.27%.

IN the June 9 issue, a front-page story — "Biday says Lo Wee hints but member" — misstated the last date of the controversial Bicolano politician, allegedly caused by deposed President Joseph Estrada. The lot size is 7,000 sq. m. — not 7,000 hectares.

NBI charges Ong with inciting to sedition

From page A1

at criminal charges for disqualification were considering leveling against Ong. The others include violations of the Anti-Wiretapping Law, illegal assembly, and illegal detention involving Tiglao, Walter Bolante of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Malacañang supported the move against Ong. He said similar charges would be brought against other MPs that participated in chasing retired Maj. Gen. Bernardo Abut, who had called for the resignation of Mr. Arroyo.

On Friday, Ong called a news conference to announce he had the original copy of an alleged transcript of Mr. Arroyo's telephone conversation with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano purportedly showing the rigged the elections.

He then took sanctuary in the San Carlos Seminary saying he feared for his life. He still is there.

The arrest order was issued by Judge Jaime Salazar of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 221 after Ong failed to appear in court for the hearing on his motion to quash the charges against him.

Salazar ordered Ong's bail bond of P120,000 forfeited and gave the prosecution and the defense 10 days to submit their memoranda.

Complaint

In a 10-page complaint, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Ong violated article 142 of the Revised Penal Code, which penalizes a person for uttering "seditious words or speeches, writing, publish, or circulate scurrilous libels against the government."

The article also makes it unlawful for people to "suggest or incite rebellious conspiracies or riots, or which lead or tend to stir up the people against the lawful authorities or to disturb the peace of the community, the safety and order of the government, or who shall conspire to such evil practices."

Wycoco cited Ong's press briefing in which he "openly lambasted the names Mr. Arroyo was the illegitimate President, as she supposedly committed fraud during the 2004 national elections."

Asking the President to step down, Ong allegedly called on the public to mount a "civil disobedience" campaign and for the Church and the people to rally behind him while he was locked up at the seminary, Wycoco said, although he noted few responded to his plea.

"He also called on the military to cease forward and respect [the Arroyo], as in Commander in Chief because she has to immediately resign [because] she has cheated her way to power," Wycoco said, quoting newspaper reports.

Such statements, he said, were "obviously designed to create hatred against the present administration and to encourage the people to dislodge President Arroyo from office."

Issue not who's talking

Asked whether the department would pursue the wiretapping case despite statements by Ong's lawyers that only vicarious of the crime could bring the complaint, Gonzalez said: "Yes, I'll make my presentation on it. The issue here is not who is talking but the fact that there is wiretapping."

Gonzalez also said he visited Bobbi yesterday and offered to put him under the department's witness protection program. Bobbi's wife has claimed that intelligence agents had been illegally detained by Ong in the meantime.

Bishop Socrates Villegas (with Bobbi out of the compound on Monday following his safe escape) said Ong has said Bobbi gave him the original recording of the wiretapped presidential conversation but denied he forced him to remain with him.

Bobbi has rejected Ong's allegation that he was the source of the audio tape. In exclusive television interview he was simply asked by Ong to read a statement denouncing government manipulations.

Apart from one television interview, Bobbi has not spoken to reporters to answer questions to detail about his association with Ong or elaborate more on the mysterious wiretapping.

Military authorities have said Bobbi was under investigation and that his lawyers had advised him not to speak to reporters.

Ex-Isafp chief 'invisible man'

By Gona Pandiagan

PAMP Adam of Fleet Ranga is a sort of an "invisible man" in the military establishment, true to his calling as spy master.

As chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), the 54-year-old Ong has tried to cast himself as a shadowy character, "not to be known or seen."

Here the spotlight is on him or the "Glorygate" wiretapping controversy, it would be impossible for him to stay out of sight.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy "Maharlika" Class '75, Ranga was Isafp chief from September 2003 until late last year, when he had to step aside because of illness.

He was on the job during the time Isafp operatives allegedly bugged President Macapagal-Arroyo's telephone. The wiretap purportedly showed Mr. Arroyo cheated in the May elections.

Upon his return from a long medical leave abroad, reportedly for treatment of leukemia (a fatal cancer of the blood), Ranga was named AFP deputy chief of staff for intelligence with superintendence over Isafp.

Cort denial

When Isafp was identified by whistle-blower Samuel Ong as the source of what he described as the "mother-of-all-tapes," Ranga instantly cast denial that Isafp was ever engaged in wiretapping, allegedly left supervisor and agent naive in his case. He has since made himself unavailable to the media.

The last time Ranga came under media glare was during the Oakwood mutiny on July 27, 2003. He was then commander of Camp Aguinaldo. He was also one of those people whom the mutineers had asked to negotiate on their behalf.

Ranga was believed to have been chosen for the role because he had once been a coup leader.

He joined the 1989 coup d'état led by Col. Gregorio Honasan for which he said he was imprisoned. Ranga, then aged 37 and a Navy lieutenant commander, later told an investigator joined the rebellion still gained him.

Among the first on his chair to be promoted to a one-star rank, Ranga got his second star to rose admiral in April. He is from San Pablo, Laguna, the son of an army colonel man. With a report from Ira Pedroso

Military...

From page A1

spiracy or investigation on the alleged involvement of military personalities in the wiretapping issue," said AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Honorado. "The AFP will never tolerate illegal acts and any officer or enlisted personnel found wanting will have to face the full force of the law."

The military had on first kept silent over allegations he were involved in the wiretapping purportedly showing Mr. Arroyo cheated in the last election. Then it issued a blanket denial after whistle-blower Samuel Ong said he was given the original tapes of the Pano. don't telephone by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

It said the body lacks wiretapping capability

Honorado said as a matter of policy, the Armed Forces did not engage in illegal activities. But he said such the implication by Ong of an Isafp operative, Sgt. Vidal Doble, the Armed Forces would like "to settle the issue once and for all."

1969 coup

Galor said the 54-year-old Ranga had resigned to Isafp officers and men involved in the 1989 coup attempt against then-President Corazon Aquino.

He said some of those men were now being implicated in the wiretapping controversy, which Malacañang had said was part of an opposition plan to unseat Mr. Arroyo.

Galor yesterday said Ranga would go on leave or he should be relieved in order not to disrupt investigations. Ranga was Isafp chief during the last election, and Galor said Ranga should not "let last June's office an escape not like he is unduly interfering in the investigation."

Galor said that on August 16, 1989 Special Chief, Ranga did "navigate a powerful position that could influence the inquiry within and outside AFP. He said this should "offer no room for there may be some aftermath or bias the AFP."

House asks GMA: Comment on tape

From page A1

alleged conversations between her and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, "she must come out clean," said Gonzalez.

Speaking on the Bonifacio Day holiday, Gonzalez said the people were also challenging the President to break his silence.

"We want her to speak up and tell the truth," Gonzalez said, but added that PNP was not calling for the replacement of Mr Arroyo as President.

But the protest of the Diocese of Cubao in Quezon City sought an explanation from the President.

"We ask [her] to speak to us and clarify these issues," the priests said in a statement read during a Mass at the Santo Domingo Church after the "cleansing" rally on Wednesday night at the Araneta Coliseum Complex.

They said what the country needed was not another "People Power" revolt but a "shepherd" to guide Filipinos out of the political quagmire. "Mr Arroyo is the one shepherd, she should have spoken up and told the truth, they said.

Diplomacy

Golez said the House would not ask the President's "spotted" and "communist" tactics.

But Golez, a member of the pro-administration federation ng Kilusang Filipino, said that while some of his colleagues wanted a congressional answer, the request would be "overkill as the issue deplorable and impeachable enough to bring the presidency."

"I never class the various cases, rather work together in crafting a bill addressed to the President — requesting her position on the tape," he said.

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Kidnapping case tied to poll fraud

Front page, A1

have waited on May 17, but it was not until May 26 that a town that sounded like Mr Arroyo's made a call to the man.

Garci/Jaro's?

Demotorios, who had listened to the tapes, said she was "positive it's Garci/Jaro voice."

She said she would know her voice because Garci/Jaro was a Comelec regional director in Mindanao while she was chair of the poll body in 2001.

The taped conversation on May 31 at 11:27 p.m. had a female voice inquiring about a teacher from Tenri, now whom she found was in the custody of the opposition.

In a conversation with a certain "Ben" on June 5, the voice was intercepted that "Pandoro left you already [already]."

The Comelec official from Tago-Tago could not be contacted on her cell phone, Ben said.

Bargaining chip

Ben suggested that the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines be asked to locate Hali or that her family in Zamboanga kidnapped as a "bargaining chip."

"Nightmare na itong 'yung well-meaning na kwang-umak nya. 'Wag mo munang pahihirapan yung pamilya. Sofi teach siguro ay pwedeng maloi-persuade 'to kanya," Garci/Jaro was said to have told Ben.

Two days later, it was allegedly the President herself who phoned the man about the whereabouts of Hali, in that conversation, Garci/Jaro supposedly assured the President that he would find Hali.

"That's what I'm being briefed about. Isang e-Jacksons-think 'yan, Chel's why we're asking people to look for her so that we can control her," the male voice said.

On June 10, the PNP announced that it was filing charges against Demotorios and Baquiran for the illegal detention of him and his two children.

"Until today, I still have to see the charge sheet," Demotorios told the Inquirer yesterday.

Hali's affidavit

Demotorios said Hali came to see her on June 3 to report about electoral fraud in Tago-Tago.

Demotorios brought Hali to a prosecutor in Makati City to file an affidavit and to have a video taken of the proceedings.

"As a trial lawyer, I anticipated a situation wherein she would be forced to retake a television and raise the validity on me," Demotorios said. Her apprehension turned out to be true.

The case of Hali, however, was just one of the topics on tape supposedly discussed by Garci/Jaro and the President.

Relief of Gudani

If authenticated, the tapes could provide a context to the relief of Marine Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani in January that the "absence-without-official-leave" of Navy Capt. Rolin Angue of Tawi-tawi, and the challenges with of Sen. Rodolfo Biazon over Sen. Robert Barbers.

The tapes allegedly showed how Garci/Jaro advises monitored the canvassing. She was said to have called up "Gani" minutes after it was discovered that the ballot boxes from Lanao del Sur were empty.

The boxes were opened at about 9 p.m. on June 3, and a source whose voice sounded like Mr Macapagal's called via "Gani" about the empty ballot boxes at 9:43 p.m. of the same day.

Rumors about the wiretapped conversation between the President and Garci/Jaro have been going around in media circles and in Manila coffee shops since the middle of May.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye virtually confirmed the rumors when he ordered two

GMA to visit . . .

Front page, A1

"She will be leaving Monday morning and coming back Monday afternoon."

In what could be his quickest trip since during her four-year stay in office, Mr Arroyo will meet Hong Kong business leaders, including his pool Andrew Li, Chan Tze-ch Pang, who will host a luncheon in her honor.

Bunye said Mr Arroyo would also meet with her ambassadorial adviser, Tony Brook, former head of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption. Brook has begun efforts to set up standard operation right corporate in 14 key government offices in the Philippines.

The President plans to visit several major tourist financial and business hubs, like Singapore and Tokyo, to promote investment opportunities in the Philippines. During those trips, Mr Arroyo will seek to highlight achievements made under her economic reform programs.

"The message is that things are OK in the Philippines," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in his weekly news conference. "There is still a good climate for investments."

Mr Arroyo, who has been accused of cheating in her 2004 presidential election and whose family has been linked to illegal gambling payoffs, will be back Monday afternoon to welcome Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at the start of his two-day state visit to the Philippines. *Reports from Christine O. Avendaño, AP and AFP*

NTC cautions broadcasters on airing tape

By Charissa S. Batino and Philip C. Tubeza

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas have agreed to caution broadcasters airing the controversial taped conversation purportedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

This came after a meeting between the two groups Tuesday night subsequent to the Commission assured the broadcast organization that it was not imposing censorship.

"The supposed wiretapped tapes should be treated with cautionary and heightened responsibility, giving due consideration to the processes being undertaken to verify and validate the authenticity and factual content," said the NTC and the KBP in a joint statement.

The KBP lauded as an "assault on press freedom" the call of the NTC on Saturday for radio and television stations to ban the airing of the alleged wiretapped conversation between Mr Arroyo and a member of the Commission on Elections.

"[The] NTC response and call not only hinder freedom of the press and the right to information on matters of public concern, KBP and its members have always been committed to the exercise of press freedom with high sense of responsibility and discerning judgment of fairness and honesty," said the NTC and the KBP.

The NTC clarified that contrary to the KBP's earlier perception, it had not issued a new circular changing down on the broadcast lines.

"What is being relied by the NTC is that the exercise of press freedom is done responsibly," the commission said.

The commission only stressed that there were existing memorandum circulars on programming that radio and television operators must comply with.

The NTC said broadcasters would not hesitate to revoke portions of radio and television stations that were airing and showing campaigns to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

Iloilo, an appointee of Mr Arroyo, urged broadcasters not to be responsible, fair and honest.

In the House of Representatives, some legislators ordered the NTC to explain the "gag order" to media playing the controversial audiotape.

On the floor, Gilbert Remulla, chair of the congressional investigation of radio tape, directed the NTC to explain after House Minority Leader Francis Escudero challenged the order's legality.

"I would like those to answer a few questions regarding the supposed order they issued threatening or banning the airing of the tape in various media representatives. If it does not constitute a wiretapped conversation, I question the legal basis of the issuance of the order," Escudero said.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

Memo implicates Annan in UN contract

UNITED NATIONS—A newly disclosed memo appeared to cast doubt on UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's insistence he was unaware of a bid by a Swiss firm that employed his son Kojo for a lucrative contract under the scandal-ridden U.N. oil-for-food program.

UN-appointed investigators were "urgently reviewing" the memo, Michael Holtzman, a spokesman for the Independent Inquiry Committee led by former US federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker, said on Tuesday.

The memo described a late-November 1998 Swiss meeting of annan with officials of Cotecna, in question Services, just weeks before the Geneva-based company won the contract.

The contract has become a focus of annan's critics, including several US Republican lawmakers who have accused him of mismanagement and called for his resignation.

[End] UN spokesperson fred Eckhard said Annan had no recollection of any such meeting during the trip to Paris, for a summit of French-speaking world leaders.

Annan's son, Kojo Annan, was a Cotecna consultant at the time of the encounter described in the memo, but it was unclear whether

ANNAN

Kojo was present at the encounters. The document was written by Michael Wilson, a family friend of the Annans who was at the time a senior Cotecna executive.

The one-page Dec. 8, 1998, e-mail, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, was addressed to top Cotecna executives and detailed just two sentences to the UN contract matter.

It stated: "We had brief discussion with the SG and his entourage. There collective advice [sic] was that we should respond as best as we could to the Qbit sessions of the [sic] 1-11-98 and that we could count on their support."

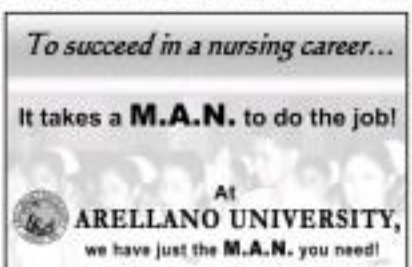
The memo was first disclosed by the New York Times.

Annan, in Portsmouth Monday, "has no recollection of any such exchange," Eckhard told reporters.

A view that the United Nations would support Cotecna's bid "could not have come from the secretary-general," Dreosser he had no knowledge that Cotecna was a contender for that contract," the spokesperson said.

Common officials have provided a consistent and unitary account on the UN building in New York on Dec. 1, 1999—the meeting the memo was apparently referring to. Wilson, in a second memo obtained by Reuters, said the session went well.

Annan, in charge of getting the contract are very good. He presented a sound technical tender independently priced. With the active backing of the Swiss Mission in New York and effective but quite [sic] lobbying within the diplomatic circles in New York, we can represent a positive outcome to our efforts," Wilson wrote. Reuters



Police crack down on child porno across Europe

THE HAGUE—Police across Europe swooped down on dozens of homes Tuesday and arrested more than 20 suspects in a vast operation against an online child pornography network, the largest of its kind ever coordinated by the European police organization, Europol.

Around 350 addresses of a wide range of people suspected of being involved with child pornography were searched [Tuesday] morning, Europol said in a press release.

The raids, code-named Toborsdayl, were launched simultaneously in 13 countries after a six-month probe that started with a rip-off Russia child defense group.

Europol director Ilkka Peter Raterd said he hoped they "will lead the investigators to some of the producers behind these evil deeds."

At least 15 people were arrested, and police seized large quantities of equipment including computers, laptop computers, mobile and other material containing images of child abuse, mostly of young boys and girls from eastern Europe and southeast Asia.

Most suspects are subject to further investigation, according to Europol.

Members of the network disseminated and/or, damaged pictures of molested children, Europol did not say whether the investigation targeted child sex customers or producers or both.

Depending on their country of residence, suspects could be jailed from one month up to three years for possession of child pornography and up to 10 years for distribution of child sex images.

Police forces from Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden were involved in the operation, code-named "Toborsdayler" which was led by the Italian police. AFP

RELIGIOUS ICON

Worshippers hold vases along a road at the base of a statue of Guanyin, the goddess of mercy, on top of the Repulse Bay in Foshan, southern China's Guangdong province. Hundreds of worshippers climb 268 stairs daily to the top of the hill. AFP

Jackson won't share bed again with boys, says lawyer

LOS OLIVOS, California— Michael Jackson recovered at his Neverland Ranch Tuesday after his cunning acquittal on child sex charges, but his lawyer said the pop star would never share his bed with young boys again.

Physically and mentally exhausted, the 46-year-old King of Pop stayed and rested to regain the strength to re-launch the legendary musical career he put on hold during the marathon trial, friends and family said.

"Michael is fine. He is inside," its fine Joe Jackson said as he left the ranch that was besieged by an army of journalists and television crews who set up satellite trucks, generators and even portable toilets at the gate.

Jackson drove straight back to the sprawling California estate Monday after jurors cleared him of sexually molesting a 13-year-old cancer survivor, using alcohol to seduce him and conspiring to hold him and his family captive.

In his first public statement following his acquittal, Jackson on Tuesday thanked loyal fans who stood by him during his gruelling four-month trial.

"Thank you to my family, friends and fans for all your love and support," read a statement that flashed up on barely-scanned on the star's website. "I will never forget I love you all. Michael."

Fans around the world relished the dramatic finale, which the website likened to the 1990 release of South African political prisoner and Nelson Mandela, the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and the 1968 birth of civil rights leader Martin Luther King.

"The truth was marvelous," it said.

But Jackson emerged from the victory frail.

"He's relaxing with his family and recouping after all he's been through," said Kevin Mc[illegible], a family friend and occasional spokesperson.

Jackson's flamboyant lead attorney Thomas Mesereau said the singer will need time to recover from his ordeal, and will become more reclusive to shield himself from renewed attacks.

While condemning the prosecution case, Mesereau said Jackson was determined never to be exposed again to pedophile accusations, which he said he believed the superstar's own admission that he liked sharing his bed with children.

"He is not going to do that any more because of the false charges that have been brought him," Mesereau told NBC television.

"Michael is a very kind hearted, child-like person. He has been run over so too many people, he has let a lot of people come freely into his life and home and that is how he got himself in this any more."

Brother Jermaine Jackson said the pop star would eventually go back to the music industry.

"Right now he's going to rest but you know, it's in his blood, its in bones," Jermaine Jackson told CNN television.

In a sign of Jackson's rehabilitation, the organizers of next month's Live8 charity concerts said he would "consider" letting the famed entertainer perform if the latter can stage reinvents.

However, promoter Harvey Goldsmith, who is assembling the bill for the July 2 shows in London, Philadelphia, Paris, Rome and Berlin, said Jackson was probably not in a fit state to play this.

Mesereau confirmed Jackson is exhausted.

Jackson's attorney also lashed out at the prosecution for what he termed "the most egotistical" way it held the case. AFP

University of the Philippines Law Center
INSTITUTE OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
MCLE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR LAWYERS (2ND Compliance)
SATURDAY COURSE
Venue: 2nd Floor, Lecture Hall, U.P. Law Center

DATE	SUBJECT	CREDIT HOURS	LECTURERS
02 July	Responsibilities and Liabilities of Lawyers (Ethics)	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Jose L. Sabio, Jr.
	Special Purpose Vehicle Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (MCLE Prescribed)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Atty. Ma. Rosario Bernaldo
09 July	Rules on the Declaration of Nullity of Marriage, Annulment and Legal Separation, Provisional Orders, Adoption and Related Rules (Procedural Law)	Three (3) (9:00-2:00)	DCA Teresita N. Elepaño
	Pre-Trial and Trial Skills	Four (4) (1:00-5:00)	Justice Lucas P. Bersamin
16 July	Problem Areas in Legal Ethics	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Adoracion L. Aquino
	Updates in Administrative Law and Procedure (Substantive and Procedural Law)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Prof. Salvador T. Carlota
	ADR at the Workplace (ADR)	Two (2) (4:15-6:15)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
23 July	Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy in Appellate Practice	Four (4) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez
	International Law	Two (2) (1:00-3:00)	Prof. Merlin M. Magallona
	Developments in ADR	Three (3) (1:15-6:15)	Prof. Alfredo F. Tadiar
30 July	Updates in Civil Procedure (Procedural Law)	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Prof. Marvic MV Leonen
	Reforms in Land Registration (MCLE Prescribed)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Prof. Ramon A. Casanova

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Rumsfeld defends Guantanamo

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Tuesday defended the Guantanamo prison against critics who want it closed by saying US troops are here at big financial risk. It is and no other facility could replace it.

Separately, two leading Senate Republicans said the prison for foreign terrorism suspects at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, had created no image problem for the United States, but did not call for it to be closed.

"I think the key in that is to move the judicial process forward so that those individuals will be brought to trial for any crime that they are accused of rather than enabling it to languish indefinitely or perpetually," Senator Jon Kyl said.

Asked to explain the advantages of keeping the Guantanamo prison rather than moving every last detainee elsewhere, Rumsfeld told a Pentagon briefing, "I don't know any place where we have infrastructure that's appropriate for that suitable group of people. The inconvenience is enormous."

The United States holds about 520 detainees from more than 40 countries at the Guantanamo prison camp, which it opened in January 2002 after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on America. Most have been held for more than three years. Only four have been charged.

Rumsfeld said US taxpayers have invested more than $100 million in military construction for the Guantanamo prison camp, and taxpayers are spending $98.995 million annually to operate it.

"The United States government, let alone the US military, does not want to be in the position of holding suspected terrorists any longer than is absolutely necessary," Rumsfeld said. "But as long as there remains a need to keep terrorists from striking again, a facility will continue to be needed."

RUMSFELD

"The real problem is not Guantanamo then," Rumsfeld said.

"The problem is that, in a large extent, we are in unexplored territory with this unconventional and complex struggle against extremism. Traditional doctrines covering removals and military prosecutions apply well to some.

"There's not common circumstances," Rumsfeld said of the Guantanamo prisoners. "They're believed to be from armed killers."

Rumsfeld's comments came a day after Vice President Dick Cheney defended the prison in the face of criticism from human rights activists and some lawmakers—mostly Democrats, but a few Republicans, too. Former Presidents Jimmy Carter and others have called for the camp's closure.

Critics decried the indefinite detention of Guantanamo prisoners, who the United States has denied rights accorded under the Geneva Conventions to prisoners of war.

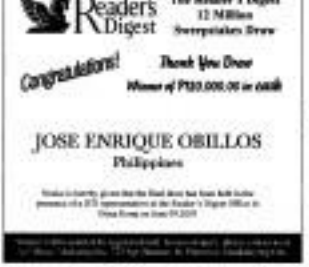
An FBI memo has accused Pentagon personnel at Guantanamo of using "torture techniques," and the Pentagon recently declared five cases in which US jailers "mishandled" the Koran.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee said, "I believe absolutely that we should not shut it down."

"But, there is an image challenge that we have that centers on Guantanamo, an image challenge that we have with Abu Ghraib," Frist said, referring to the prison in Iraq where US forces abused and sexually humiliated prisoners.

"And if we have one or two actions saved to be taken, we will do it. But to cut and run because of image problems is the wrong, wrong thing to do."

Reuters



LARGEST SETTLEMENT

JP Morgan to pay $2.2-B to Enron investors

NEW YORK—JP Morgan Chase & Co. said on Tuesday it had agreed to pay $2.2 billion to investors of collapsed energy firm Enron Corp. in what lawyers said could end up being the largest-ever US securities settlement.

JP Morgan Chase, the No.1 US bank, announced the settlement just four days after Citigroup Inc. said it would pay $2 billion to Enron stock and bond investors who accused the banks of helping Enron in a huge accounting fraud.

The Citigroup settlement with lead plaintiff, the board of regents of the University of California, had been expected to trigger settlements from some of the other 11 financial firms involved with Enron, which collapsed in December 2001.

"The name is tightening around the necks of the other defendants. Stay tuned," William Lerach, the lawyer representing the University of California, said.

He expected the final figure to exceed the $6.1 billion that were a dozen. Will Hoyt, banks agreed to pay to settle allegations they didn't adequately examine WorldCom Inc.'s financial health when they sold securities in 2000 and 2001.

Walter Citigroup, the world's largest financial services company, not JP Morgan Chase admitted any wrongdoing in agreeing to settle the Enron suit but both said they wanted to put outstanding litigation behind them.

JP Morgan Chase said it will take a pretax charge of $1 billion against its second-quarter earnings to pay the settlement and to cover its litigation reserves.

The bank has already warned its trading results in the quarter may be the weakest reported in some time, hurt by bets made with its own cash and dismal markets.

It said it settled to eliminate the "uncertainties, burden and expense of further protracted litigation."

President and Chief Operating Officer Jamie Dimon is known to want to resolve outstanding litigation issues quickly so the New York bank can move forward with its business.

The class-action settlement must be approved by the Board of Regents of the University of California and JP Morgan.

In its financial statements, Enron said it overstated profits by hiddden $47 billion. As well as the Citigroup and JP Morgan settlements, Bank of America has agreed to pay $69 million and Lehman Brothers $222.5 million.

Other institutions involved include Barclays Plc, Credit Suisse First Boston, Merrill Lynch, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Toronto Dominion Bank, Royal Bank of Canada, Deutsche Bank AG and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Lynch declined to say if other settlements talks are ongoing.

"But I don't think there is any question the final amount will be in excess of the $6.1 billion [for WorldCom] and the largest securities settlement ever," said Lynch.

JP Morgan Chase said it would add about $1 billion to its litigation reserves, of which about half was associated with Enron-related matters and the balance in estimates of expected additional costs associated with the remaining legal actions.

JP Morgan's reserves stood at about $3.3 billion and are being lessened by the bank after it agreed to pay $2 billion to settle the WorldCom litigation, said Merrill Lynch.

Enron filed for bankruptcy after the use of off-balance sheet deals to hide tens of billions of dollars in debt were revealed. Its *auditors sparked a flurry of* shareholder lawsuits and some executives are scheduled to go on trial in January 2006.

The energy trader emerged from bankruptcy protection late last year as a private entity which is in the process of liquidating remaining assets to pay off part of its debts. Reuters

Major quake off California triggers brief tsunami alarm

A 6.8 EARTHQUAKE—A major earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck off the coast of California on Tuesday triggering a brief tsunami warning along the 320 Base Coast, witnesses have said.

But scientists in Japan's Pacific earthquake center came from Mexico to Canada, there were no immediate reports of any damage or injuries and authorities said there was no threat of a tsunami.

The quake struck 30 km before reach the Pacific Ocean, 1st has west-southwest of the California coastal town of Crescent City at 7:34 p.m., according to the US Geological Survey.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC), a US government-funded body that monitors tidal waves in the Pacific Ocean only issued a warning that a tsunami might be on the way but later cancelled it.

A giant tsunami hit Crescent City in 1964 following a massive earthquake in Alaska, killing 11 people, destroying 29 city blocks.

Witnesses felt buildings shaking along the California coast but there were no immediate reports of damage, according to reports, while CNN reported that lines lying across Crescent City were briefly evacuated.

"No destructive Pacific-wide tsunami threat exists based on historical earthquake and tsunami data," the PTWC said.

"However, earthquakes of this size sometimes generate local tsunamis that can be destructive along coastlines located within a hundred kilometers of the earthquake epicenter.

"Authorities in the region of the epicenter should be aware of this possibility and take appropriate action," the center's website said.

Seismologists said the latest quake was located 480 km northwest of California's capital Sacramento, which lies north of San Francisco.

A major earthquake off the southern coast of Indonesia on Dec. 26 triggered tsunamis that killed about 227,000 people in 11 countries.

The American hunt been hit by a series of quakes in the last day, including a 7.9 earthquake that jolted Peru about 12 p.m. Tuesday, killing 11 people, according to authorities. AFP

Britain, France still at odds over EU budget

PARIS—Britain and France failed on Tuesday to resolve major differences over the European Union's long-term budget, leaving the bloc facing financial deadlock as well as a political crisis over its Constitution.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said it was hard to see how the differences could be bridged after talks with French President Jacques Chirac, dimming hopes of an agreement on the 2007-2013 budget at an EU summit on Thursday and Friday.

"The meeting I've just had with President Chirac was immensely useful but obviously there's disappointment," Blair told a news conference after meeting Chirac at the president's Elysee Palace.

"I think it is difficult to see these differences being bridged, but of course you know we can never be sure," he said.

France and other EU member states want Britain to compromise more on annual budget rebates from its coffers.

Chirac said earlier he might compromise if France plans ground on the big EU farm subsidies it receives. Paris has rejected this.

Failure to reach a deal at the Brussels summit would leave the EU facing financial turmoil, adding to political problems since French and Dutch voters rejected the EU constitution—intended to help the enlarged bloc work smoothly.

A delay in securing a budget deal would put in jeopardy urgently needed public investments in the EU's new member states which need to be in the mainstream bloc.

Chirac did not speak to reporters after meeting Blair but a spokesperson said the presidents assessed a "reasonable and fair" deal in which each member state made sacrifices in responsibilities.

Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker said that in Luxembourg on Tuesday morning to two-to before a deal in time for the summit and before Britain takes over the EU's presidency from Luxembourg on July 1.

Asked what would happen if no deal were reached by that time, Blair said: "I don't think it will be any use to me as well, personally as yet the right answer eventually." Reuters

RETURN TO FLIGHT
The space shuttle Discovery rolls out of the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) with its upgraded external fuel tank at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, June 13. Nasa hopes to make a launch date of no earlier than July 12 for a mission to the International Space Station. AP/CNN

S. Africa's Mbeki fires deputy over graft case

CAPE TOWN—South African President Thabo Mbeki sacked his graft-tainted deputy Jacob Zuma on Tuesday in a step seen boosting Africa's declared drive against corruption.

The move came amid rising tensions within the ruling African National Congress (ANC), as mounting a widely popular public campaign that is expected to succeed Mbeki in 2009.

"For some in the coalition [the... it will be best to release, honourable Jacob Zuma from his responsibilities as deputy president of the republic and members of the Cabinet," Mbeki told a special joint session of parliament.

Mbeki had been accused of backdragging on Zuma after the deputy president's former financial adviser Schabir Shaik was convicted of corruption and fraud this month.

The judge's ruling implicated Zuma and said the pair's relationship was "generally corrupt," sparking calls for Zuma to resign.

Zuma, popular with the ANC rank and file as well as its trade union and Communist allies, has refused to comment on the case but has been tried in the court of law.

But Mbeki called time on the standoff on Sunday in a move seen across the continent and beyond as a major step in the battle with corruption, a vexing subject for international donors, traders and companies looking to invest in Africa.

"We fully support the president in these difficult times, in the life of our organization, nation and government," he said.

Analysts said Mbeki's decisive action would be viewed as supporting South Africa's image and its rapid economy.

"It will be seen as the right thing by South Africa ..." said Razia Khan, chief economist Africa at the Standard Chartered bank in London.

Mbeki said he would name a successor later for Zuma, a 2-da he appointed in 1999 and who helped end years of bloodshed ing apartheid in 1994, and the minority Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party.

Zuma's predicament has sparked speculation over who may succeed him, especially as for the past 20 years the deputy president of the ANC has gone on to be party president.

Analysts say Mbeki may name an interim deputy until the ANC elects new party leaders at a frequently congress slated for 2007. For the time being, Cabinet minister ANC deputy president.

Defense Minister Mosiuoa Lekota, Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, ANC Secretary General Sigabatha Mantashe, Minerals and Energy Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as well as government spokesperson Joel Netshitenzhe have been cited among possible replacements. Reuters

Japan, France to jointly develop new supersonic jet

TOKYO—Japan and France will jointly develop a new supersonic commercial aircraft to succeed the retired Concorde, Japan's trade ministry has said.

Companies from the two countries will invest 100 million yen ($814,000) annually in research over the next three years to build a passenger plane capable of flying faster than the speed of sound, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday.

The cooperation opens the possibility of breaking by almost half the flight time between Tokyo and Paris to six hours or less in an aircraft with about three times the capacity of the Concorde with 300 seats, according to Japanese media reports Wednesday.

The ministry said the two sides will try to resolve the difficulties that had plagued Concorde, including jet engine noise and high fuel consumption.

Japan has successfully tested an engine that can cruise at speeds of up to mach 5.5, or more than five times the speed of sound. It offers this technological knowhow as well as its research in engines and energy-saving technologies, the ministry said.

The French side brings experience from the Concorde, the world's first and only supersonic commercial jet operated by the French and British governments, which flew more than 50 years ago.

"This is truly significant international cooperation," Japanese trade minister Shoichi Nakagawa said in the statement. "Bringing their respective advantages together, Japan and France will be able to offer highly advanced aircraft and services in the future." AP

Army deserter visits family in US after 40 years

FREEDOM, N.C.—A former US Army sergeant who deserted his squad and defected to North Korea 40 years ago returned on Monday to the quiet upstate-New York town of his native North Carolina, where some residents denounced him as a traitor.

Charles Robert Jenkins flew from Japan with his wife and daughters to Washington, D.C., and then to Pease Airport, his first stops on American soil in more than 40 years.

Relatives drove Jenkins a red pickup truck to Jenkins' sister's home in tiny Hudson, North Carolina, where his 91 year-old mother awaited.

Neatly dressed and slightly stooped, Jenkins wore a gray suit and a formal smile as he climbed the steps of the two-story brick home. He said "Oh Lordsy" he was glad to be home and that it felt "really good" to be back in North Carolina.

"I feel very happy," Jenkins told the assembled camera crews as he posed on the porch with his family. "Thank you especially because some of you came all the way from Japan."

JENKINS

American flags flew along the main business street in Hudson, this weekend and emphatically that the flags were to mark Freedom's Flag Day holiday, not Jenkins' homecoming.

"He should have been shot," said Donald Gregory, shopping at a grocery store in the town of 1,200. "He should never have left his post."

Other residents were more sympathetic, at least toward Jenkins' mother.

"As a parent, I can't imagine not knowing where my child was for all those years," said Shirlan Schaub, whose husband grew up in Jenkins' neighborhood in Bunker Square. "I feel like he was a traitor but I think he has every right to come home. It's like someone getting out of prison."

Jenkins was a 24-year-old sergeant leading a patrol through the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea when he abandoned his comrades on a cold January night in 1965 and fled to the communist north. He later said a communist officer had threatened to arrest his second lieutenant if he did not defect.

Jenkins was forced to teach English to young cadets and became part of Pyongyang's propaganda machine. He married Hitomi Soga, one of at least a dozen Japanese citizens abducted and taken to North Korea by its agents decades ago to teach them Japanese.

Soga was allowed to leave North Korea with her eldest Japanese children in 2002 but Jenkins stayed behind with their two daughters for fear of severe punishment by the US military.

The plight of the two families involved Japan, which asked Washington for leniency for Jenkins due to wide sympathy for Soga, and the family was reunited in Indonesia last July.

Jenkins turned himself in to US authorities in Japan in September and pleaded guilty at court-martial to desertion and aiding the enemy. He was dishonorably discharged and served 25 days in a military jail, then settled with his family on Japan's remote Sado island.

He was expected to spend about a week in North Carolina and said in a statement last week that he looked forward to "catching up on all the years" with his mother and relatives.

"It has been very strong wish for a long time to see my mother again. Thanks to everybody's support, I can realize it. Finally," Jenkins said. Reuters

WE ARE FAMILY
Jonathan Hoffman keeps her recently hatched offspring warm as the father looks on at the San Diego Zoo June 14. Male flamingos share in the parental duties of incubating the egg and feeding the chicks once they hatch. AP/CNN

Veteran civil servant Tsang wins HK's leadership race

HONG KONG... Veteran civil servant Donald Tsang effortlessly won Hong Kong's leadership race on Wednesday, filling papers that showed he had the solid backing of an election committee that picks the Chinese territory's leaders.

Tsang romped his two rivals by collecting 713 of the nominations from the election panel of about 800 people. The other candidates—both businessmen—conceded days ago they were unable to gain the minimum 100 nominations they needed to be placed on the July 10 ballot.

Tsang announced his nomination soon after filing with election officials, who would verify the endorsements and announce results Thursday.

"The process was very smooth," Tsang told reporters at his campaign office.

"I feel very excited. I feel I have more responsibilities," he added.

The race was never really a contest for Tsang because his campaign had the biggest advantage: support from Chinese leaders. The election committee is dominated by members loyal to Beijing.

Hong Kong voters were never allowed to directly elect their leaders when the territory was a British colony. Beijing continued to deny them the right when the city returned to Chinese rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula designed to allow a wide degree of autonomy.

On Wednesday, radical lawmaker Leung Kwok-hung, also known as "Long Hair," protested

TSANG

at Tsang's campaign office, demanding that Hong Kongers be given the right to elect their leader. He scuffled with security guards and yelled, "Blame us not, Donald Tsang" and "Stalinist style election. It's worse than pigs and dogs."

Tsang was the right-hand man for the previous leader, Tung Chee-hwa, who stepped in like-for-like feuding inside. Many believe that Beijing lost confidence in Tung and pushed him out to make way for Tsang, who was more experienced in running the city.

Tsang's rivals in the leadership race were pro-democracy lawmaker Lee Wing-tat and pro-establishment Alex Fan Fung-ping. Both have complained that the race was unfair because Tsang was fixed to defeat them. But the front-runner said that he would only defeat candidates who could not get enough commitments to be on the final ballot.

Lee told reporters Wednesday that he only collected 51 endorsements. He alleged that people who showed interest in supporting his views were targeted by pro-Beijing organizations that urged clients to support Tsang.

"If they show any interest to nominate me, they'll receive many phone calls," he said.

Chan conceded the election was over. "I have no chance of beating my opponent, Mr Tsang," he said.

The flamboyant, heavyset-voiced Tsang seems like an unlikely success story. A policeman's son, he never went to college. He briefly worked as a pharmaceutical salesman before joining the civil service, where he has worked for nearly 40 years.

He became financial secretary in 1995, the first ethnic Chinese to hold the job in 150 years of British rule. He was named a knight of the British Empire in the final days of British rule—an honor that many thought would doom him if he stayed in government after the handover to China.

During Tung's eight years of rule, Tsang was reputed to be a loyal official who efficiently carried out orders. When Tung resigned, Tsang was the No. 2 ranking official responsible for running the government.

Tsang has had modest success with the pro-democracy camp, but it's unlikely he'll push hard for bold political reforms—a move that would quickly earn revocation with Beijing. He recently achieved collapse in a TV interview that a Hong Kong leader could not be successful without the support of China's central government. AP

COMFORT WOMEN Former South Korean comfort women, who served the Japanese Army as sex slaves during World War II, shout slogans during a rally in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul Wednesday. The protesters opposed Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Seoul on June 20. AP

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Australia mulls softer migrant detention laws

CANBERRA—Australian Prime Minister John Howard has signaled changes to his tough immigration detention laws in an unusual swipe at the conservative government lawmakers over public criticism Wednesday.

The vote within the conservative government was prompted by a group of four politicians who promised to introduce legislation to soften the strict mandatory detention laws which have been central to Howard's four consecutive election victories.

Howard says the four backbenchers law on Monday but failed to reach a compromise on changes, prompting one government politician to lash out publicly at "his colleagues for creating division within the ruling conservative coalition.

"If you get the dossier because the vast majority of the people in your party want it, agree with you and you mislead believe it's a public endorsement, well I thank you actually has credibility," politician Sophie Mirabella told Australian radio.

Australia is a nation built on immigrants but it has one of the world's strictest immigration policies, detaining illegal arrivals, illegal workers and people who overstay sometimes for years while their cases are heard.

Howard said talks with the four backbenchers wouldn't continue in order to fend off their private legislation, due to be introduced into parliament next Monday, and he has offered to look at ways to speed up detention for asylum seekers.

"We're going to keep mandatory detention for those who need it, particularly having in mind the position of children and the time sometimes things take. There are ways we can make it work better," Howard told reporters.

Australia's immigration detention camps, which have been criticized by international human rights groups, have been hit by protests, hunger strikes, riots, escapes and suicide bids as asylum seekers become frustrated at delays in hearing cases.

The government is investigating 201 cases of possible wrongful detention and deportation, uncovered since a recently ill-Australian was mistakenly detained as an illegal immigrant and another held and mistakenly deported to the Philippines. Reuters

US optimistic N. Korea would give up nukes

WASHINGTON—The Bush administration, under fire for what critics call its failed North Korea policy, expressed confidence on Monday that "one way or another" Pyongyang ultimately would give up its nuclear weapons.

"One way or another they're not going to have these systems," said Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, the top US diplomat dealing with Pyongyang.

"And so the real issue for them is what are the terms under which they'll give them up," he added.

Hill's two-hour appearance before the US Senate Foreign Relations panel kept the focus on unsuccessful US diplomatic efforts to revive six-party negotiations on the North's nuclear program, which Pyongyang has boycotted for one year.

But he reiterated the US position that talks options without another discussion and added a dose of reality to recent optimism that Pyongyang may soon come back to the table.

"North Korea's unwillingness to return to the table can be extremely costly for them because it really is forced existing in the isolation and isolation and loneliness," he said.

Hill said Pyongyang seems to be "testing our mettle ... testing to see whether or not we going to give up on endless arguments with our partners. They're waiting to see whether or not we're going to start negotiating with each other and with ourselves to continue the pot for times. And so they feel there's some advantage in waiting."

Leading opposition, Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware said US policy was a failure.

The North have passed responsibility for the nuclear crisis, he said, but "this administration has also made a series of poor choices, in my view and his view ... pursued the policies that stand a reasonable chance of mitigating and ultimately reversing North Korea's threat."

On President George W Bush's watch the North "declared itself a nuclear power, produced enough plutonium to build at least six or eight nuclear weapons, and made super threats about coming and on the verge of testing a weapon," underlining non-proliferation efforts and confidence in America's ability to ensure peace in Asia, Biden added. Reuters

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Debt relief

IS WHAT has been widely hailed as a historic agreement, the world's richest nations last Saturday canceled $40 billion in debts owed by 18 of the world's poorest nations. During their two-day meeting in London, the finance ministers of the Group of Eight decided to "cancel the full cost" of writing off these countries' debts from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank.

EDITORIAL

Nine other countries will qualify for similar debt relief within the next 18 months, after which 11 more will be included in the list, bringing the total debt write-off to $55 billion.

Officials of the countries which stand to benefit from the program have generally welcomed the agreement, although some complained that it was too little and too late. Noeli singer Bono, who has been in the forefront of the international campaign for international debt relief, said the deal was "a little piece of history," but conceded that "millions of lives will be changed by the news."

That is understandable in a hit. Billions of Africa's starving people will be saved by lifting the debt burden, which has greatly slowed down the efforts of these countries to develop. Many more will survive and even live more comfortable lives if the G-8 would follow it up with other measures, like increasing the level of aid to these poor nations and opening up their own markets to agricultural exports from the same countries.

Before all those things, what the G-8 needs to do is to ensure that the billions saved from debt payments will not merely line the pockets of dictators and other officials of these poor nations. As one analyst has suggested, a mechanism must be put in place "to ensure the savings on debt are spent wisely" because government corruption and inefficiency are "the main factors why these countries remain poor."

The rich nations are aware of this problem and recognize the need to put up safeguards. The United States, for one, had earlier announced that debt relief would be linked to "improving governance, reducing corruption and completing a program with the IMF that demonstrates a commitment to sound economic policy." But while no one will dispute the necessity of improving government efficiency and reducing corruption, there are bound to be problems with regard to IMF prescriptions which have once too often proven ineffective as well as intrusive. Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar said the G-8 debt-relief program "should not be subject to conditionalities that would undermine the sovereignty of a state."

Despite such reservations, not a few nations have come forward to demand that they be counted among the world's poorest nations. Unless the rich nations suffer from a sadistic streak, they should consider expanding the program to include those countries that are being weighed down by huge debt burdens that is getting heavier every year. For while they may not be counted yet among the world's poorest, they are getting there surely and quickly. And this is mainly because servicing their debts take up a huge chunk of their budgets, leaving little for education, health, infrastructure and other development projects.

This is the situation in which the Philippines is caught. With the government indebted to the tune of P3.9 trillion, it has to set aside fully one-third of its P681-billion budget for 2005, or P181.7 billion, just to pay the interest. Take away the share of local governments amounting to P131 billion as well as the salaries of government workers amounting to P200 billion, and all that is left for building roads, schools and other infrastructure is P72 billion. How can a country that invests so little on social and economic development ever move out of the debt trap and move forward?

It may be too much to expect the country's creditors to write off all its debt. If the rich nations were to extend this privilege to every debtor nation, the IMF, the World Bank and other international financial institutions would probably have to shut down. But now that they have seen the urgency of extending debt relief to the poorest nations, they should also consider a similar program for other heavily indebted nations.

It doesn't have to be a complete write-off. In the Philippines, for instance, a good start would be the cancellation of loans tainted with fraud, like the financing for the construction of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that has never been used. That is what's needed to give the country a better shot at development. And it is also what justice demands.

'Dead meat' and sanctuary

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

AN UNEXPECTED issue that spun off from the cosmic wire-tap controversy is "sanctuary in churches."

Former National Bureau of Investigation chief Reynaldo Daza and Gov. Chip Vidal Doble dashed into the normally placid San Carlos Seminary seeking protection. If arrested by flagging wire-tapped tapes "I'd be dead meat," Daza wailed.

Using shelter and sensing security belong to the Church's "pastoral attitudes," Bishop Arthur de Castro explained. But sanctuary doesn't make the Church "just shades of the templates."

We've been there before. Ousted Comelec boss Luis de Leon fled Comelec Aquino in fear of assassination since "people suspect him false to democracy," the Manila Archbishop Jaime Sin Cardinal Sin explained. Jaime Sin Cardinal Sin's "Church" fingers and businessman Mert Jimenez sprinted for Jaime Cardinal Sin's residence. Gutierrez failed to rush Church in time. Instead, he spent a chastity night for seething against Presidente Estrada, they were "dead meat."

Officials of all political stripes are mistaken. In contrast, some Church personalities do evoke confidence.

"Expect his Angat Hills Magchaisi ka (Here's safe haven in my cave Tuan me)," Batangas Bishop Socrates Villegas told a weary Doble, amid the wire-tap specialists opened to create to Camp Aguinaldo. "Sya na," Doble said.

Sanctuary is the area around an altar that in ancient times had such. Some men, Egyptian, Greeks and Hebrew recognized a religious "right of asylum."

Unlike the "anything goes" Senate pride of hosting, video-panel-controversy England's King Edward's are the first organizations in 600 A.D. that "granted the asylum door to be protected, as a sort of refuge, etc."

Westminster Abbey and 21 other churches, by Norman times, had formed sanctuaries. To be cleared, one had to reach the church (or another) "[1]. There, he'd stop a bell, cling to a ring or sit on a "frith stool."

In other places, there were "sanctuary towns," some a mile from the abbey, "one of the finest" and most visited site in the country was Beverley.

Sorry Vili observed the law of crimes eligible for asylum. And in 1613, James I abolished the custom. But the concept of Church protecting people from arbitrary punishment remains. "Go and learn what this means," the Master said. "I will have mercy, not sacrifice."

Sanctuary adapts to current conditions, writes Jim Corbett in "Sanctuary, Basic Rights and Democracy's Dark Times." Those include people fleeing war, persecutions, famine—to direct God-given talents.

In South Africa, Soweto's church becoming the Blessed Lady as "Queen of the World" spotted its doors "when all other avenues were closed to the oppressed." Similarly, that's the Presidente Nelson Mandela recalls. In Cologne, Germany, the Antoniterkirche Church gave asylum to a 19-year-old refugee.

In Rwanda, Catholic leaders were faulted for failing to use their sacred force to provide adequate haven for Tutsi fleeing the 1994 genocide.

"Did the Church really try to make use of its influence?" asks Camillo Alexander in his paper, "Safe Sanctuary"—The Role of the Church in the Genocide." "Or did it hide behind its doors?" Over a million Tutsis died in that holocaust.

Assistant Manuel Quezon III has written on the asylum the Philippine Commonwealth Government provided for Jewish families fleeing Nazi terror. Refugees in the country first dubiated their doors, hosting reprisals.

In advanced countries within the European Union, Canada or the United States, sanctuary dashes onto Irish waves of refugees who arrange transports, synagogues or dissenters.

In the Philippines, however, government's right to deport illegals, Philip Wilcoxon writes in "Sanctuary's People Before the Law" flutters, the question is convicted: Is this law more important than those people?

Sanctuary's dilemma became so commonplace would be for "more than breaking the law"—cases were which our supply this gesture, more or all cases sanctuary workers notify.

Triumph of evil

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FIVE years ago, the country was crying out in pain and rage. The leaders of civil society were storming right and left, culminating in the huge gathering at the Ateneo on Oct. 26, 2000, dubbed Kompil II. It was organized by Cory's NGO and Kompil-using Filipino and drew in more than 200 organizations, coalitions and networks. It was "the people's response to the deepening crisis in the Philippine society," Imelda said. It was "a people rising to a boil, citing as a ring as one can a "fetch more."

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Reyes would later have his memoir, "Live Here," banned by GMA on the instigation of Erc. But that would happen later. Before that, Reyes was brimming with hope and optimism. I know because I was there.

It was here, moreover, business actually put its money where its mouth was. It joined cause its positive to oppose Erap. So ateneo would have roll me the money that were duck way was enough to fund their rallies a week. But you could see it patently in the men and women occupying seats. Taipans that pressured their energy over Erap and sporting hotels that had not known a day's sweaty work for refinancing packet lunches or six discussions that had descended on Ayala. I know because I was there.

People openly proposed things that would have astonished Raul Gonzalez, who now considers listening to the tapes of GMA's conversation with Virgilio Garcillano as act of domestic heroism. Rolando Lillaga, one of those who proposed himself, said: "We are staying embittered workers' airway leading to a general strike and the first call is for workers to participate in the rallies. Yet are also calling for a computer strike to remote Metro Manila. We talked about the hotspots and location of the two banks. Especially PCI could not be isolated because there was the concern that the Social Security System is prominent fund for employees in the private sector] plus other big money there."

Where are all those people now?

Personally, I wouldn't mind if they came out and defended GMA. I wouldn't mind if Cory and Jim, Unday and Jim, Ellen and Manong Jose, Concepcion and Bill Luz, the group formerly known as Hagibayan and the one that

FVR's lead recalled

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cassayan

Speaking of those tapes, Digo Vidal Belmonte is the lucky agent who's believed to have wiretapped the alleged conversations between Gen. Garry Delfin's comptroller Commodore Virgilio Garcillano. But added for now "your guess" by the wife of Rep. Bebot Belmonte is startling revelation. The agent, whom Hugo Boy Siblagan noted to be studied drawing while in the San Carlos Seminary, denied during the inquiry Bernard Ong's claim that a Lt. Colonel Sagar was given as loan by aides of former MB deputy director General Ong and that he says just asked to serve up to coaping it, to ensure that a juicy job in a revolutionary government was up would be up, presumably following the flight of Mr. Arroyo. If someone to be sent to Dubai, who has been under interrogation by the MB with such to-that extent, but the reason nonetheless is not damaging to Ong's credibility. The questioned Sagar is indeed still Ong, who had claimed he obtained from the body the "mother of all tapes," had to convince Delfin to save up the tapes. Did Ong false anything else? There are too many conflicting details in the case of the tapes.

* * *

Last Tuesday, I wrote about the laudable prayer launched by former Senate President Aquilino Pimentel to petition the Supreme Court to declare Cesar "Ceasy" Virata's bond "excessive" that will contain substantial material on Scarce, Mafi and Hughes, as well as minor formation. Copies of the newsletter will be distributed free to public officials and media across the country. Also, in the spirit inspiring that Attorneys, who is a list top members, a Harvard M.A. and a State Ph.D. graduate, and three-time Senate topnotcher, does not consider it too trivial to involve himself in preparing instructional materials for high school students.

But Sarmiga is not working alone on this project. Involved too is a whole team of eminent persons who all want to help improve the welfare of our youth. After serving on the editorial board are Atenio University, professor of historian Evelyn Agoncillo, to whom historian columnist Randy David, social studies scholars, Socrates Amado, professor at Graduate College in Marikina, economist advisor Gamaliel Cruz, youth and national advisor and Lt. Jose Morales, a former Philippine ambassador to International School Saint English and Filipino advisor. Underlining the importance is Salonen morning, son of Quezon's morning, who was deported to Tel Aviv by Ferdinand Marcos against Senate protest. The advisers board is chaired by UP president Dr. Emerlinda Roman and its members are three university presidents—Adamson UP president Jose Alvarez, dean of Ateneo de Manila College Antonio Roberto. Retired Supreme Court Justice Florenz Regalado, former Senate President Edgardo Angara, former Senate President Aquilino Pimentel, former Philippine Christian University, and Quezon Governor, also served as president of Silliman University during martial law.

* * *

Mahlique (Anonymous) are the hackers of the newsletter, which was officially launched at the English last June 7. The speakers were Ateneo President Emeritus Father Joaquin Bernas, S.J., Ateneo Professor Emerlinda Roman, and Dr. Ben Diokno, who is also the author of the book "Ka Amado," a biography of Filipino pre-martial law activist Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, who was canonized by Pope John Paul II in October 2002. Diokno is also the author of the book "Ka Amado," a biography of Filipino pre-martial law activist Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, who was canonized by Pope John Paul II in October 2002.

Surrogate mom

YOUNG BLOOD

Beverly S. Figueroa

I'm tired of kids. I love being with them, and taking care of them. But, unfortunately, I'm the youngest in our family so I rarched up-bonding alone my younger siblings/cousins.

I was about 8 years old when I took my "first child" under my wing. Until was 3 to the time, and my mom used to bring him in our house almost every day as his parents were busy running their businesses, just like my own parents. I would feed, change and play with him.

Then I was one of twelve, mom of eight. I just made up, we would take a nap. I would cuddle him like a teddy bear, the way mom used to cuddle me.

My "second baby" was Jonny. She was a year younger than David. Almost without having, we would play our kiddie game when mother's little and week, cooking, tender loves, washing, and the like. Jonny learn fast. Most of the time games I played with them was "house-house," since I was always the the "cooking lesson."

I remember, too, climbing the guava tree in our backyard. The yellow and big bees annoy them, while I had to make do with the green and smaller ones. I was still 4 to 5 then, and climbing was not easy for me.

There were kids however very close to me. Each time Jonny's mother would come to fetch her, she would cry and cling to me with all her might. No amount of persuasion could make her go home.

Then came summer and suddenly there were five of them, all first cousins of mine. The more, the merrier, I thought.

But it wasn't all sugar and spice and everything nice. When one of the kids got hurt, my elders would give me a tongue-lashing. Sometimes, too, I served as their knight in shining armor, whenever the big kids picked on them. But knights and their own manners, especially if that knight was eight aged 6.

When I entered grade school, the five kids would all line up on our house on weekends. And again we would play to our hearts' content. I remember to love the children so much that I never sacrificed my homework during the day and as TV-food (the ate my favorite TV shows for cartoons until I learned to love them, too.

That was not all the sacrificed I had to make. I missed playing with children my own age. I was in a hurry. I was in between two opposite worlds which I wouldn't learn to understand too long to write down. Suffice it to say that during those early days of our childhood, I was their surrogate mother.

When they eventually went to school, our meetings became less frequent. Never-the-less, we were still able to bond. But as they matured, their interests gradually changed. Worse, they preferred to spend their spare time with their newfound friends rather than with me.

Now I'm in college. I rarely see them anymore. Yet were our separate ways, we would only meet during family gatherings. On one of those rare times, I don't know what there me to ask their about the times and the things we used to do when we were kids. I was disheartened when they said they hardly remembered any of it! My companionship here was a thing of the past. I was relegated to just a handful of undemanding analogs she have in myself. Pop out, what good are memories if they are confined in our minds and not shared with others? What's the use in walking them?

Now, another bunch of kids are coming of me, running and running to me. I'm not sure if I'm ready for this. But should I take them when I can already trust the writing on the wall, which is the end of the day I would end up the best again? Dear learned, yesterday.

I was talking until the day had and I dined out. During our conversation, I told my self to be a little more open to mine when he would take me to the plaza or play Caught by surprise, I softly said, "No." He asked me if I could tell remember a particular holiday that he used to sing to me. Again, I shook my head. I couldn't for the life of me remember because a lot of time and experiences had passed since then. I was in a hurry. I was in between two opposite worlds which he would read the books fables and tackle Mother Goose rhymes or the days when we would wander in the meadows in the plaza it now populated) and pick some wild flowers. There were more, but some only registered in my mind like hazy photographs.

Dad must've disappointed as I was with my counter, I thought. But when I looked at him, he was as calm as the clouds on a summer day. No trace of bitterness was on his face.

"Dad, don't you think it unfair that I have practically forgotten all those things?" I asked.

"No, my child," he said, looking amused. "It's perfectly understandable for small kids to forget the distant past when they grow up. As their minds age, their brain is still small, and they explore only their immediate school. Their interests only increase as they mature, which is the obligation of every parent to help their kids to understand the world around them. That should precede my parent's own personal needs or emotions. And, on top of this, parents should love their children unconditionally, without counting the cost."

My father's words gave me back to my senses. I felt my tensions fade away. Why did I ever think that I was the sole burden on my part of me? It was foolish of me to take umbrage at some long bygone of my concern' sources. I should be happy instead of hurt to watch them march to another stage of their lives, knowing much that I mean to a way most grateful in making them more aware of their surroundings, more kind and mind of adding, knowing that once in their early lives, I was their playmate, their tutor, their knight in shining armor, and most importantly, their loving and caring surrogate mother, even if those good old days have now vanished in their memory.

* * *

Beverly S. Figueroa, 20, is an AB Communication Arts graduate of the College of the Holy Spirit, Manila.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@philstar.com pls together with your cellphone and e-mail numbers. Please keep your piece to 600 words and post your's confined to or if emptied, the piece may not be published and the compact you sent with.

Ruminations on 'Aba'

HUMAN FACE

Msr. Cerezo P. Diayo

THE night sound, *pero* when compared to the outer many analyses and in-your-face debates on one of the constitutional issues that have ever spawned similar simultaneous under the political rain clouded here. But I risk sounding petty.

I don't know if this latest prayer spoof has the dark "negativism" of the Catholic bishops who refused to have lumped with the likes of Santa Claus, the tooth fairy and pre-EDSA frauds. One of the two nine-super-paying annual I received some from the head of a famous PR agency in a parody of the "Our Father" that I found quite funny, and which Senate President Manuguid devised and his family.

It starts off fine: "Ama namin (Santa) nagsasayo ka sa langit...." I don't want to list the whole "prayer" here lest I offend the sensibilities of those who take their religion seriously. But when I read the word "prayer" because I think there should be respect for what many consider sacred and profound. I cannot look the PR lady to say that those lines are funny. Or offended by the spoof of scripture because that also have gone to regard for the basket of jesus.

Mr. Arroyo could be brought down from her perch in whatever way he will I care. It indeed the Constitution is the "basic and highest law of the land," it should leave the "Aba..." alone. And if the President's magnanimous nature and compassionate heart, or in her beloved scripture-loving parents as they scream to have pledged—and these two presidentiables fit the bill because they could be very religious—then I ask to think, gaga pala Ayan, If...but it. If you want to repeat history.

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And so now even the sacred and profound are now spoofed.

The same go for the desecration of the statue to JS soldiers, which was wrongly reported. Or Bonifacio worshipers who have been known to have spotlighted it and which sparked splendid and roused debate in some parts of the Muslim world, demonstrated how reports about multi-lion dangerous be what is held sacred (even if not proven true) may provoke violence. One has to be aware of the multiplied to understand their rage. But then one need not be one of them to fully understand, one need only understand the Golden Rule.

I did not watch the "Aba" spoof—Rated Multitude" cage where they learned from a small restaurant Newsweek report about how their lady lands was drilled judgingly flushed less or placed on the toilet. I was not here agreed with how the washing machine was doomed. Nor with those things burned literally in some places, but I cannot disagree with the how the Muslims felt. If the reader with an Islamic sounding name never me as calmly point out that the reverse reaction was demonstrated only in some parts of the Muslim world, and didn't run too narrow to picture the entire Muslim world as barbaric-uncivilized people.

I read somewhere that our names just say that the names is simply words on paper and that words in this universe is selected when the body book is read. Our names—either calculated or deliberate—are the saving phrase. That is not just selected while nature is the message it can be. It's not as simple as that.

The name Ashli rose with the Holy Eucharist for the Catholics. The commentated here is not just the name Ashli but the whole phrase "Banal na Aso, Santong Kabayo" interesting to me ejection. The moment the host is consecrated, it becomes the body of Jesus Christ in substance and essence. That is theology. Believe it or believe.

As in the case of the birth of their faith, the sacrifice Christ himself mentioned in the Last Supper. The Eucharist is not a mere symbol, like the national flag is. But, were flags are supposed to be sanctified in a certain way by Civil Society, not to be taken lightly. Flags, after all, are not supposed to touch the ground.

On another topic, as Filipinos are wont to say, I caught the tune President Hamon' televised interview of Atty. Jose Flaminiano, Jr. and Atty. Jose Flaminiano by David Celdran and Ramona Constantino, regarding the strict lapsed, damning conversation allegedly between the Ateneo and Comelec vice-chairman Virgilio Garcillano. I thought Ateneo-trained lawyers would be more circumspect in what is supposed to be used for national security and not for personal or partisan gain. The President's statement that one is his last one's word—I'm appointment may not care is for that purpose either.

But as they said in this episode—those who figure prominently in the unfolding political drama, it's okay to steal, to bribe and to be lied, to cheat, to lie, to do something illegal as long as you don't get caught in the act. Wiretapped always gets results or never hurt.

It's a sad season.

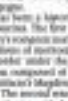
* * *

Msgr. Cerezo P. Diayo is a diocesan priest.

Plebiscitary democracy

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



AN AMERICAN writer once proposed that the problem with the Philippine system of democracy was that it was too democratic. He was referring to how we address political questions by submitting them to referendum. Advocates of the parliamentary system might take heart in this observation since, after all, what is a "snap election" but a plebiscite on whether or not the people want Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to serve out the remainder of her term?

Indeed, plebiscitary democracy is arguably the most unanimous approach to political leadership, and was just as purely parliamentary systems are to referenda. Advocates of the parliamentary system might take heart in this observation since, after all, what is a "snap election" but a plebiscite on whether or not the people want Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to serve out the remainder of her term?

Anglo-Saxons are skeptical of plebiscitary democracy because they view it as pandering to the mob, which the fundamental purpose of representative democracy is to filter out. Referenda are also seen to place the governing power in the hands of a select ruling class or, as Benjamin Disraeli put it, a "directing class." It was in defense of this idea that he fought Queen (in 1852), who preferred a government of "her own personal friends."

Indeed, the idea of plebiscitary democracy is fundamentally Anti-Jacobin. Because, the French political philosopher who left the shortest definition of what a democracy should be replied with a healthy confidence in the wisdom of the majority vote.

In other words: the Anglo-Saxon conservative view is to entrust governance to the elected professionals; the radical French tradition is to allow the people to vote the people for them to fight over and then decide.

And as it was that on April 28, 1969, President Charles de Gaulle of France resigned after his proposal to grant regional autonomy was defeated in a referendum was interpreted as referendum. His example is particularly interesting because of the strong reverse our political class has shown in the French model (a president with real powers, but a powerless legislature).

Indeed, our political class has been fundamentally divided along those two lines since 1922, at least—even if today's politicians no longer have the depth of learning and contemporary relevance that the generation raised under Spain possessed.

In 1922, Manuel L. Quezon, Senate President and leader of the majority party, rejected the proposal of Governor General Leonard Wood to grant the executive branch the power to veto laws passed by the legislature. Quezon argued that the veto power was unnecessary because the people could always vote out of office those legislators who passed laws the executive disapproved of.

Quezon's opponents, led by Sergio Osmeña, argued that the veto power was necessary to prevent the passage of laws that would be detrimental to the public interest. Osmeña's position was that the veto power was necessary to prevent the passage of laws that would be detrimental to the public interest.

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The PSQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

SILENCE a step to the killings, some journalists have taken arms to defend themselves

All of us, not just media, are bound to tell the truth

KILLING killings, growing corruption and a host of other problems may just be the tip of the iceberg. Still the arrest of some media killers today and only the arrests of media practitioners?

How about the deeper problems of "assassinations, drug raids, fantasy raids, big tax evaders and their protectors in high offices, all the way up to Malacañang and the Supreme Court?

Treating symptoms and ignoring the root cause have been the way of mediocrity and mediocrats. Band-aiders pioneer in dalliance-oriented chat peeps up arsenates of inequality, injustice and exploitation. Many years ago, we spoke of injury and awful awareness of society. Then we ran, we went to war, now we are doing deep deep thinking, deep sowing, deep analysis and, surely, deep action.

Superficiality is an instrument of the status quo and characterizes elite thinking. Why are journalists killed? Superficial thinking passes the buck to others, blaming them for something that the blamers are equally responsible to.

Yes, there may be abusive media practitioners, but this does not justify the killing of media people. Even if a journalist is murdered for selling the steak? Even if a journalist gets caught for illegal possession of heroin?

Moreover, media are not the real the problem here. They publicize and allow hinterlanders who are the product of mercenary media and they accuse scholars getting more media, which tell the truth as faithfully and unexpurgated as possible to blame the dinges!

Media, unless exploitative, attractive and passive are hideous monsters ahead of the truth. Genuine media provide both force and dispassion, which become the basis for appropriate intervention. Good governance seeks good media. Bad governments control media.

Not more than professional media, we need a morality upright. Media needs to proclaim the truth at all times. The death of the 46 journalists should not be treated, and lessons learned, taken from it. Investigative journalism valuables have been killed for telling the truth.

We, too only media have one duty: to tell the truth. All of us, especially those in a position to be heard, must also tell the truth. From the rooftops at the top of our voices. Together we demand, "Stop media violence. Stop the abuse of the third law. Protect and support whistle-blowers. At least governance and corruption and promote getting great freedom!"

—FR. ROBERTO C. ROXAS, Gumboro, Executive sec. Legal & Pa., Project 1, Quezon City

An inspiring answer in the face of poverty

THERE is no question on the Philippines editorial "Unspeakable dignity" (PDI, 6/6/05).

It is inspiring to read stories like these about people living in poverty who have been helping underprivileged students of Ateneo, especially in a time when we are faced again with another crisis.

I totally agree that this Only Social Program can provide a model to promote dignity and inspire hope especially among those who aspire to acquire quality education. Congratulations to the organization like Ateneo. The program is a working model for education and should be replicated nationwide.

But while noble and inspiring, the program is largely unknown and unfelt in a nation suffering from a massive breakdown of confidence and values. Once it is a nation that has become notorious, plagued with cynical hopeless and desperate.

How can we inspire hope in this process/ situation? How can we recognize our dignity for whatever is left of it as a nation?

The only way now, perhaps, would be to show that things can improve, through people like these Ateneo priests and programs, that are sincere and committed and, most importantly, programs that inspire optimism and nobility in every Filipino, be it not poor also.

Through this model, our national leaders, both public and private, can inform the non-Filipino value of Ateneans to motivate a distressed population to strive for a higher level of life.

Through this model, the government can begin mobilizing its resources and embark on a program with a simple developmental formula but penetrating cause for the nation, hence for the Philippines, food for the hungry, water for the thirsty and light for those in darkness.

And perhaps, this model can answer the questions in the face of growing poverty and increasing hopelessness in our country: what can we do?

—IGNACIO SICOR, jones_sicor@yahoo.com

LETTERS

Sweeping, unfair statement vs NGOs

THIS refers to Ramon Tulfo's column, "Women's center-oriented groups a hindrance" (PDI, 6/7/05) where Ms. Tulfo's statement to be sweeping and very unfair, not only to us in Gabriela but also to other women advocacy groups.

In our 25 years of helping women in various activities, we have always been consulting our colleagues and the women services with respect.

We want to clearly clear regarding Angelo Colet's case. Last year, we received an e-mail from her asking for our assistance. We learned that she was already sheltered at the PNOC Ex Center. Even so, we still went to extend her help. Our psychologist, Jovina Moreno, was able to talk to a Nova personnel who was surprised that Angelo was able to communicate with us. As mandated operating procedure to shelters for battered women, the shelter does not give leeway or privilege to communicate with people outside the shelter, for their own protection. We wouldn't able to talk to her and get the statements of her case after this clarification from the shelter.

April this year, we received a call from Inez. We learned that she was already out of the shelter and that Angelo was killed. Our psychologists talked to her over the phone, and the two of them agreed to meet somewhere. But the meeting did not transpire. Inez was having some family problems. They again scheduled another meeting, but Inez had no money for fare. That was the last time we heard from her. We did not receive another call from her. We can only guess, in the way of communicating with her, as she did not give us any contact number. It is only now, after our organization was mentioned in Tulfo's column, that we learned of her whereabouts.

Shame to do our work especially for women victims of violence has been our way of wanting to advance women's rights and welfare. Since in the case of Angelo Colet of Gabriela, we receive an average of 40 cases per month through the victims' personal visits or calls. To say that "angeling dang ang ginawa" is a very unfair and indeed an insult to our 25 year record and integrity. We always exert our best efforts in helping our clients and, if requested by clients, that they don't want to be known, confidentiality.

We appreciate that Tulfo shares our concern for helping women victims. At this point, it would be best if we can coordinate out of force in helping Inez Colet. Thank you very much.

—LENI M. ANGUS, secretary general, Gabriela, 23 Scout Delgado St., Barangay Laging Handa, Q.C.

Suspect journalism

WE take strong exception to the columns of Ce Aguino (PDI, 6/3/05) and Conrado Banal (PDI, 6/7/05) wherein they accused us of certain acts inconsistent with our duties and responsibilities as independent directors of Equitable PCI Bank. The allegations are totally baseless, irresponsible and slanderous.

Ce Aguino's June 3 column suggested and commented on a letter that does not exist and was never received by the EPCI board of directors. The board received on June 1, 2005 a letter from three leased directors, but it nowhere contained any of the absurd allegations Aguino cited in concerned media articles thereof to be taken up at the next board meeting.

In turn, Banal's June 7 column accused EPCIB president Peter Bornasworo and the three of us "for rotting—without fail and also without shame for the benefit of the Co family." The gave is a litany of falsehoods and "sick" innuendoes. Banal's campaign even refers to some of us as "attack dogs," calling in question our long record of service in government. So, Banal's only basis for these insinuations is our responsibility as independent directors. Let us, therefore, enumerate to Ted the board's responsibilities as independent directors:

First, the bank has three independent directors and four Bornasworo is not an independent director; he sits on the board by virtue of his position as president and CEO.

Second, whenever we vote in the board, we do not vote for the benefit of a family, we do so in light of what we judge to be good for the bank and all its stockholders. As the minutes of all board meetings will bear out, we have never taken any actions that may be misconstrued as inimical to the bank or as misfeasance of our duties as independent directors.

Third, our period of service as independent directors has coincided with the bank's banner performance in financial results and strategic reorganization. Net profit grew by 33 percent over the past year. EPCIB is the best performing bank stock in the local stock market. Asset paid was P400 million in dividends this year. This, in our view, is also our service to the legions of Social Democrats, Seniors and Government Service Insurance System pensioners.

Evidently, the two columnists misunderstand the duties and responsibilities of an independent director vis-a-vis private corporation.

The concerted attacks leveled at us are intended to malign our reputation as well as tarnish the image of a publicly listed company. We can only interpret them as part of a bigger effort to assess control of the bank from the present leadership and to shackle our voices on the floor. If this is indeed the objective of the two columnists, we do not understand why Aguino and Banal have assigned themselves literary roles in the assault. Or why the hapless would tolerate the use of its pages for such character assassination.

—ANTONIO L. RAMOS, CESAR A. SANTOS, ROBERTO S. ROMULO, Equitable PCI Bank, Makati Commercial Center BW dela Rosa St., Makati City

'Converted' motor vehicles undergo extensive testing

THIS is in reaction to the article "Over 2 'road terrorists' spewed every minute," written by Tonia Salmon, which appeared in the September-Monday issue of the Mail.

It may be true that there are trucks and vehicles converting in the highways of Metro Manila, which may be considered as "road terrorists." The writer, however, missed some essential points in her article.

For instance, the truck drivers in the picture has an old plate number. If you would notify both the Land Transportation Office, the truck might have been registered in the early 90s. Back then, the technology of converting trucks and vehicles from light-based diesel (LBD) to lead-based diesel (LBD) was not as strictly monitored as now. Today, the process of converting a vehicle from DBD to LBD requires that with the "implementing standards."

Before they are registered with the LTO, the converted vehicles undergo extensive testing for roadworthiness by accredited vehicle testing centers. In Subic Freeport, there are two vehicle-testing centers accredited by the LTO and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

In addition, all motor vehicles have limited life span. A truck which has been converted for more than 20 years would surely have broken or missing parts. Missing wipers and broken headlights may be attributed to normal wear and tear, not to improper conversion.

So why do trucks do not still have vehicles standing in the highways of Metro Manila, which are not road-worthy? Maybe, we should ask the LTO, the government agency responsible for registering motor vehicles and undertaking vehicle-testing centers.

Since motor vehicle licenses must be renewed annually, the LTO, before approving renewal applications, should require motor vehicle owners to comply with existing laws and standards. If the owners do not renew their vehicle licenses, their law enforcers should impound the vehicles for public safety.

—MAL PEREZ, operations manager, Subic Bay Marine Corp., Bldg. 1417, Airport Highway Subic Bay Freeport Zone

Turning to Jesus in times of crisis

GIVE more we find ourselves in the midst of a crisis. What is more desirable about these events is that they cause richer because of the strengthlessness and restlessness of the people. It becomes of the manifestations of people who want power for themselves, leaving the already impoverished Filipino the victim. These events in God's World of Salvation. It is time to turn and to the people! Then we can to find guidance through these troubled times.

It is distressing and disgusting that we have been both to ourselves and to the world. The most frequent comment of those both here—no emphasis is that our institutions are not to be trusted. We ask them: Can we then see who claim to be dominated or our legal institutions?

We, compassionate investigations of late have achieved nothing except media mileage, simply because Congress has no power to prosecute. Those who wish to destroy the party must prosecute their misdeeds—we before the alluding phase of narrow-lipbar and gullible audiences, but in the whole process of criminal justice.

Senator Jilli Arroyo Ausmal Ong's parenting is itself curious. While he claims to be a witness to wrongdoing, it is apparent that he also has a political agenda—he wished for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation and like the comfort and solace of her position.

The Lord laid down the standard by which we shall be judged in the end of time. Did we recognize him in the least among us?

The ultimate criterion therefore of the righteousness or the malice of private listeners and administrators alike is whether or not their actions and words in every test of greater love, concern, regard and care for the poor and the least privileged.

Truth is liberator a value or aims: truth on the part of which the listeners and witnesses, truth on the part of the administrators. There is nothing more distressing than to witness the sad fact that we are becoming a nation of liars, and the process is rapid. Lying is the first part of lies and duplicity. We therefore ask the administrators to be truthful—not only in regard to the accusations of Mike and Mike, but also, and probably more importantly, in regard to the damage by officials of government of their constitutional and moral duties. We also demand truth from the accusers and their witnesses, for there is nothing more in this world than to expect corruption and assume justice for a change of conscience and honesty!

We are humbled by our service to—only not that of our leaders, but their dear ones, our troubled days remain before though in the in the we are reminded of the world and its aberrations, we still find strength in miracles this season humble of our knees, before the God who causes darkness he has people even through compassion sent!

—FR. ROMULO F. MUNOZ, O.S.A., head, academic affairs Office, Philippine Judicial Academy, Supreme Court, Manila

'You've got mail'

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Mercurio

WHENEVER I write about reform in the institutional Church, I get two kinds of reactions: those "for" and those "against." "Bravo Nope, keep on writing!" OR, in a "Get over a cloud kind: those who cannot to move between "for" and "against."

As usual those "against" were unequivocal in their objection. One would never be no less than four sources, for "certain Church documents" or "pronouncements" that "clearly forbid such/civil" on its positions." "What is your documents to prove this?" Were the "Holy" and "Pit" ever in the official "Index of Forbidden Books"? Where were they put in and when? Sometimes—but "the Church finally took

[author block]

Across the NATION

[author block]

Boracay resorts OK ecology plans

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY have agreed to disagree on land titling, but they could not agree more on environmental protection.

Resort owners in Boracay have crafted individual seven-year environmental management plans to save the world renowned island from deterioration caused by unbridled development.

At least 39 members of the Boracay Association Inc. (BEI) have submitted their management plans to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources detailing individual plans for water utilization, management of solid and toxic wastes and wastewater connection.

The individual plans were in compliance with the environmental concern agreement between the BEI and DENR signed early this year, a first between the DENR and the tourism industry.

"We may be at odds when it comes to the issue of land titling but when it comes to protecting the environment, we are one," DENR special action officer for Boracay, Zollo Andin told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

"This is the first time in history that resort owners themselves crafted an ecosystem plan and then required its members to submit individual plans," he said, hailing the BEI's initiative.

Andin said the plans would define the parameters by which the resorts can comply with environmental laws and protect the environment in which they do business.

The plans were turned over to Andin, Assistant Secretary for Environment Ganiwin Yunez Jr., and regional officials in a combat ceremony following a heated three-hour debate over land titling in Boracay last week.

The individual plans were presented after the master development plans for Boracay approved by the DENR in February, BEI chair Orlando Inciong said.

He said the BEI's participation in the Philippine Environmental Partnership Program showed that resort owners were serious about addressing critical environmental issues from 2005 to 2012.

"It's based on the principle of self-regulation. What laws can we ask for from the resort owners?" Inciong said, stressing that the property holders in Boracay were equally concerned with the preservation of the island's beauty.

Tourism has sustained Boracay for the past decade, with tourist arrivals to the Philippines increasing despite travel advisories posted by developed countries against the country.

Some 2.3 million tourists were recorded last year, the highest achieved by the Philippines so far.

A FOREIGN tourist basks in the beauty of Boracay's beaches.

3 suspects in murder of Esperat fear for lives, seek jail transfer

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Three of the four suspects in the murder of journalist Marlene Esperat had asked for transfer to another detention cell.

Jerry Lobrigo, the alleged gunman, and two cellmates in Barangay Dadiangas Romantes, who served as lookouts during the March 25 murder of Esperat, cried Oktoale in their letter to reason they want the transfer. They claimed that they were no longer safe as they received suspicious persons coming to their current detention cell.

They feared the maneuvered to the Esperat killing might have lined somebody to kill them.

Lobrigo, Oktoa and Romantes are under the custody of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in General Mindanao. But they were detained in a police jurisdiction in the CIDG detention cell is already crowded.

The CIDG had already filed a motion asking the Department of Justice to allow the transfer of the three accused to the General Santos City Jail. The DOJ has yet to act on the request.

The three accused told reporters that they wanted to plead guilty during the May 9 arraignment of the Esperat murder case in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, but were advised by their lawyers.

The other accused, Rowen Sloma, is already inside the custody of the DOJ, which is planning to file as state witness.

Reina, formerly an active member of body assigned at the army's 6th Infantry Division based in Maguindanao, tapped two high-ranking officials of the Department of Agriculture as co-conspirators inside in the Esperat killing. Apollo Z. Zuelo, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Coast Guard punishes corporal who hit Inquirer correspondent

CEBU CITY—The 8th Sippur Coast Guard (PCG) has punished a corporal for assaulting Jhonnex Napallacan, station director of ABS-CBN and correspondents of the Inquirer, on Saturday night.

Commander Bernly Caballero, deputy chief of Coast Guard District Central Eastern Visayas, said a penalty of "hard labor" and restriction room was imposed on Cpl. Allan Espinosa, 36, said a member of the service.

He said Espinosa would be ordered to work for two more hours after the regular work period.

He added Espinosa was indefinitely barred from taking any alcoholic drink and from leaving his station where he was assigned.

Espinosa is currently detained at the 8IST Passenger, which was declared as the territory of the Mabolo along at Inglis.

Napallacan was satisfied with the penalty imposed by the PCG on its personnel and had dropped plans to file criminal charges.

"Since the commander sanctioned him personnel, we are satisfied with the action. However, if he commits a similar instance in the future, we would be the first to file a complaint against him," he said.

At about 8:20 p.m. on June 11, Napallacan went to a store near Mandaue-Mactan Port Station in Opao to buy a prepaid card. He was talking with the store owner when Espinosa confronted the camera man in front of the store. Napallacan was drinking with a companion at the store before he hit Inquirer without provocation. The incident happened a few meters away from radio station dyLA.

Napallacan suffered a one-cm cut on his left ear and bruises. Editor Marli Rentoreda, dyLA station manager, informed Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Erik Carmon, who holds office at the Malacañang in Manila, of the incident. Rentoreda is the wife of Secretary Cesar Rentoreda, government media group spokesperson, and then called the attention of the PCG officials who immediately conducted an investigation.

A voicemail Espinosa met Napallacan on Tuesday after noon at the PCG office in Pier 3. He reportedly apologized to Napallacan, saying he did not mean to hit him. Napallacan accepted Espinosa's apology. "I have forgiven him," he said. Jolanta B. Bakomboli, PDI Visayas Bureau

Historic locomotive finds new home

By Yolanda Sotto-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LINGAYEN CITY—One of the country's first locomotives still finds a new home in this city.

Mayor Benjamin Lim said the very first locomotive in the country that traveled from Manila to Dagupan in 1892 will be donated by the Philippine National Railways to the Lingayen City government.

The locomotive is now kept at the PNR yard in Tutuban, Manila, and one of three was named "Dagupan" as its destination, Lim said.

The train, which will be turned over to the city government on June 20, will be transported to and stored in the city plaza.

Lim said the city government is considering the old PNR station here as the permanent site of the train.

Felipe Siapno, a member of the PNR board of directors, said if had always been his dream to bring home to Dagupan one of the vintage trains.

He said he was happy that his dream would soon become a reality.

Dagupan was among the first major towns of the Philippine railway system in the late 1800s.

The railway system also played a major role in Philippine history and in the personal life of the national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal.

Leonor Rivera, Rizal's long-time sweetheart, stayed in Dagupan and it was in the city where she met Henry Kipping, a British engineer.

Rizal lost Rivera to Kipping, the British engineer who supervised the construction of the railroad from Manila to Dagupan.

Thinking that Rizal had forgotten her, Rivera remembered to marry Kipping, her mother's choice to be her husband.

But Rizal had not forgotten Rivera, his sweetheart for 11 years. He kept on writing Rivera but her mother kept the love letters until Rivera was set to wed Rizal.

Rivera's mother disapproved of Rizal because of his being involved in moves to reform the Spanish colonial government.

Records of the Lingayen Dagupan archdiocese showed that Rivera married Kipping without notice to the bands of marriage or Libro de Casamientos opposed to Don Carlos Evangelista Kipping) on June 17, 1895.

At that time, Rizal was in Belgium doing the final editing of his novel El Filibusterismo.

REPLY TO GMA OUSTER MOVES

Singsons warn of 'Ilocos Republic'

CANDON CITY—Rome Ilse Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson said on Tuesday that the emergence of President Macapagal-Arroyo were removed from office without due process.

"We will come out with an Ilocos autonomous region to protect our rights and resources," Singson, a staunch supporter of Ms Arroyo, said in Ilocos on Wednesday during the inauguration of the City of Candon General Hospital here.

"The President should not be taken out without any due process. We don't want a change of government. The next issue of the whole country is different from the resentment of Metro Manila," he said.

Singson's statement during the inauguration event of former President Joseph Estrada, his erstwhile friend, helped bring down Estrada and thrust Ms Arroyo to power in 2001.

Singson said majority of representatives and governors in the four provinces in the Ilocos are open to moves pushing for federalism in the country.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson said the "Ilocos Republic" is not a move supposed to the move to oust Ms Arroyo.

"It's not only a show of support. If there is no more rule of law, we would be forced to establish an autonomous region to implement our own policy and conduct as well as manage our economy," he said.

Governor Singson said the proposed "Ilocos Republic" would include the provinces composing the Ilocos Region I—Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte.

He said the Cordillera governors of Abra and Mt. Province, which used to be parts of the Ilocos region, would be included in the set-up.

He said under the proposal, the present leaders would rule the "republic" on their own terms although Rep. Singson said they would eventually select a common leader.

The last time revealing the Cordillera Autonomous Region lost in two plebiscites in the 1990s.

Ilocos region has a population of more than four million in 2000. Frank Cimatu and Amando Doronila Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ROUNDUP

3 killed in blast

DUMAGUETE CITY—At least three persons, including her children, were killed while another child was seriously wounded when the rifle grenade they were toying with went off in Cebu Orang, Maguindanao, police reports reaching here said on Tuesday. Killed in the Monday morning blast in Barangay Mile were Bai, 10; Lala, 12; and Nanda, 28, all unnamed families. It was not clear if the victims belonged to the same family. Seriously injured, if the wounded victim, told police that they found the explosive live unarmed. He said Nanda, who is reportedly ill, let the grenade with a device. Authorities said it was when the shell exploded. Police investigators said the grenade could be one of several dud explosives still littering Barangay Mile, which was also at times a battle between soldiers and Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in 2000 and 2004. Edsel C. Tupas Jr., PDI Mindanao Bureau

Grenades logs seized

BAGUIO, Benguet (Central)—Newly installed provincial police chief Supt. Cesar Abaya has made grenades a priority after Supt. Elmo Angat began his term on Monday night. Agents had time over on Tuesday after two trucks loaded with illegally cut logs. Both trucks had Benguet logs. Operations have said the two trucks were loaded with grenades hidden from Cordillera trees. "Inspectors-General Asuncion" Supt. Angat because the drivers could not present documents that would show the logs were legally cut," Yano said. A total of 136 pieces of grenades and four were loaded in the trucks. Rodolfo T. Tuaño Jr. PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ultimatum on robberies

MALAYALAY CITY—Bukidnon Gov. Jose Maria Zubiri has given police authorities four days from Tuesday to solve the series of highway robberies in the province. Zubiri, who heads the Northern Mindanao peace and order council, issued the ultimatum after seven truck drivers and robbed passengers of a Rural Tours Bus in Sumilao town on Monday evening. Zubiri wanted the police to arrest the suspects, saying their continued freedom endangers passengers. Nonoy Espina-Macas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

4 top reds yield

CAMARINES OF ONE CITY—At least four ranking communist rebels surrendered to Central Bikolnon Command, the military said Tuesday. Lt. Col. Francisco Felaga Jr., commander of the Army's 9th Infantry Battalion, said the rebels—all members of the Bicol Regional Party—surrendered on Monday to

CA vice chair says general in rough seas

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Jaenger-ist Sid Hip. Prospero Pichay, vice chair of the powerful Commission on Appointments, yesterday said the only way for controversial Gen. Jovito Palparan to be confirmed as a two-star general is if he is transferred to another command outside Eastern Visayas.

"If he will be transferred to other commands, he can still be confirmed. And of course, if the opposition against his promotion will be withdrawn, we can still act on his promotion," he said.

But Palparan, head of the 8th Infantry Division based in Samar, brushed off the attacks, saying he was "not anxious" to have an additional star on his shoulder.

Pichay, Senate committee vice chair on national defense and security, said it would be "very difficult" for Malacañang to be confronted as a major ground due to the strong opposition from congressmen especially those from Eastern Visayas.

"For as long as there are congressmen who are going to oppose his confirmation, we cannot act on it," said Pichay, who was in the CA's six-day trip to Biasky town in Samar to speak before members of the Public Assistance and Protection Against Crime.

Since Palparan's promotion was bypassed by the Commission, he said the general would act as an interim reappointment from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He explained that an ad interim appointment has the same effect as a regular appointment.

Last year, President Arroyo promoted Palparan over the rank of major general prior to his deployment to Eastern Visayas on Feb. 18.

The CA, in its June 8 hearing, did not confirm Palparan's promotion largely due to the opposition by several congressmen who held him responsible for the series of human rights violations" in Eastern Visayas.

Samar Representatives Candido Pagaduan and Reynaldo Uy had said the "intensified" military operations in the region, particularly in Samar, Eastern Samar and Northern Samar, had resulted in abductions, harassments and killings of a number of activists and civilians.

Several party-list representatives joined the opposition to Palparan's confirmation due to what they claimed was his poor human rights record.

But Pichaya said the decision of the CA to bypass his promotion did not bother him because he was happy with his work as commander of the 8th ID, which is composed of three brigades and nine battalions spread in the provinces of Leyte, Samar, Biliran and parts of Bohol.

"I'd rather concentrate on my work here. I intend to finish my mission in the region," he said, referring to his vow to end the region's insurgency problem from six months to a year.

He also downplayed the opposition he helped by several congressmen against his promotion, saying "it is their democratic rights."

"But what they hurled against me were not all true. Probably some of their allegations against me have been but not all—," he said, he declined to elaborate.

SPECIAL FX
A human figure stands outside a house in a Baguio neighborhood, drawing the attention of residents and rescuers. The figure is a construction mannequin, but neighborhood gossip says it has effectively scared off thieves.

Cebu gov tells Cebuanos to stay calm amid scandals

By Jeannen Magallanes
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia asked for solidarity among Cebuanos amid the scandal involving President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The governor reiterated her support for Ms Macapagal who was once beleaguered in Cebu over the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Garcia also asked the people not to debase the opposition, saying opposition leaders were out to destroy the administration and the country as well.

"I call for solidarity. Let us remain calm and unite to protect the elected President of our country. We are for stability to governance. We know that this is the crucial ingredient for what we all hope this country will achieve—progress, development. Let us not allow ourselves to be confused and used," Garcia said.

Cebu Rep. Simeon Kintanar, an NPC congressman in Cebu's second district but a supporter of Ms Arroyo, said the planned impeachment case against the President will not prosper in Congress.

Kintanar said majority of members of the House of Representatives are allies of the President, and they did not see any reason to support the move, stating it was too premature to judge the President.

Msgr. Achilles Delara, the media liaison officer of the Archdiocese of Cebu, said he was clarifying his earlier statements that many in the Catholic Church favored the filing of the impeachment complaint against the President rather than calling for her resignation.

Delara said he did not say the Church is encouraging the President's impeachment.

Delara said he just said that the President should be allowed due process.

"I was asked what can I say on the move to impeach the President, I just said if there was due movement, then the President should be given due process. I did not say that we will impeach the President or we will adopt the move," Delara said.

Delara said he also based his statements on the previous stand of Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal on the issues against then President Joseph Estrada and Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Delara made the clarification after a Church official in Cebu claimed that the Cebu archdiocese has no sound pro-or-be issue.

Episcopal Vicar Msgr. Antolino Pinghay said Church officials in Cebu have yet to meet and discuss the issue.

Pinghay said he supports the move of Archbishop Oscar Cruz to pursue the "leaving" inquiry to the house so that the truth will come out.

Pinghay said if there's enough evidence against the President or her family, appropriate action should be done.

Bid to save Mt. Apo goes international

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Efforts in rehabilitation site of the country's treasures, Mt. Apo, has gained international attention with the issues of Latin American Council signifying its support for the said move.

Mayor Rodolfo Guevarra said council officials are willing to fund the rehabilitation project being undertaken by the local government and other stakeholders to save the country's highest peak from total destruction.

Part I reopened in 1999, Mt. Apo has consistently been frequented by local and foreign tourists, including environmentalists and mountain enthusiasts over the years. It was closed for four years because of the destruction of its natural landscape and was only opened this year.

Also involved in the rehabilitation of the mountain is the non-government organization Mt. Apo Foundation, Inc. (MAFI) and local governments of the towns of Magpet and Makilala in North Cotabato.

The "follow" of support came after Guevarra met with environmentalists made a trip to the United States for an investment tour.

"I am very happy that this global intervention expressed their support in protecting Mt. Apo," the mayor said.

Mat's executive director Rosmelle Libre, who accompanied Guevarra to the United States, said some environmentalists in the Americas showed concern for the rendition of Mt. Apo, which is also known as the home of the Philippine Eagle.

The mountain is also home to over 270 bird species, more than a thousand of them endemic. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

30 high school students in Pampanga hurt after classroom floor collapses

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Thirty students of the Pampanga High School here were hurt Wednesday when the wooden floor of their classroom collapsed.

At least six students were taken to the nearby Jose B. Lingad Memorial Hospital for treatment.

Dr. Leilani Magsalinsan, city health officer, said one of the victims, Jocelyn Luna, has a congenital heart ailment and was unconscious by the accident.

Magsalinsan said the heads of Ronald Arguel were broken due to the fall. Four other students, identified as Jennifer Chua, Jaimie Mina, Jade Dandaman and Charlie Mae Mariano, were treated at the JBLMH.

Bruises

The 30 other first year high school students in the class suffered bruises.

The students belonged to the Center 1 section. They held their science class at room 7 of the main building, also called Gabaldon, which was built by American Thomasite teachers in 1904.

Alyn Bell Jaragan, 12, said she fell into the nearly 3-feet high floodwater that had accumulated below the floor. Her classmates immediately pulled her out.

Dr. Chua, her classmate, said half of the floor space in the 7 meter by 8 meter room collapsed after the members of the class moved toward the door at the end of classes at about 2:30 p.m.

Chua said one of his classmates, whom they call "Kalbo," blocked the door.

Too heavy

School officials said the combined weight of the group of students concentrated on that section of the main room of the floor to collapse.

Prudencio Pineda, the class adviser, said this was the first of such incident since the classes' building in the 1935, the province's biggest public high school.

Dr. Imelda Macapagal, PHS principal, said all 38 classrooms at the Gabaldon building would be closed to ensure the safety of students.

Parents went to the school by noon and castigated school officials for allowing the continued use of the dilapidated building.

The more would have more 1,000 students to hold classes in other classrooms or under trees. The school has 9,300 students this year. *Rosario Ocampo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Australia OKs ₱126M in population program aid

AUSTRALIA—The Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID) to provide A$2.8 million (about P126 million) in grants to two population projects in the Philippines was signed on June 9 by Ambassador Tony Hely of Australia and Dr. Zahabieh Obaque, country representative of the United Nations Population Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

The population initiatives, which will help promote adolescent reproductive health and reproductive advocacy such on population and reproductive health policy and programs in the Philippines, will be co-financed with UNFPA, according to a news release from the Australian Embassy.

The four-and-a-half-year project on "Sexuality Education Through Culturally-Based Education" will develop teaching and learning materials and methodologies to enable young people to take greater responsibility for their own lives by making healthy life choices, resisting negative pressures and preventing harmful behaviors, the release said.

Specifically, the project aims to improve knowledge, behavior, attitudes and practices of students and out-of-school youth on adolescent reproductive health to reduce early sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, violence against women and children, family planning and responsible parenthood, and fertility.

Access by students and out-of-school youth to relevant information and services will be increased while the delivery of adolescent reproductive health education and services will be improved.

The project will be implemented by UNFPA and the Department of Education in the provinces of Bicol, Mountain Province, Marinduque, Bohol, Eastern Samar, Surigao del Sur, Maguindanao, Zamboanga del Sur, Misamis Occidental, Iloilo and Davao Oriental.

Firecrackers, not gunshots, heard outside gov's house, cops say

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ILAGAN, Isabela—The "gunshots" that the aides of Governor Grace Padaca Bulaca heard on Sunday near the governor's house here were actually the sound of exploding firecrackers and were not connected to a supposed attempt to attack the governor's house, police said.

Senior Insp. Rodel Pasqui, 25, Timothy Bautista, 18, and Russel Viñales, 18, said they lighted firecrackers at the gates of the California Homes subdivision at past midnight Sunday to scare off dogs near a hot they were staying in.

The subdivision is about 200 meters from the governor's official residence and guesthouse at the provincial capitol compound in Barangay Malinao.

Exaggerated

Pasqui said reports from Padaca's security aides that the gunshots were connected to an attempt to attack the governor's house were "misinformation" and "exaggerated."

Bautista Bautista, a council member of Malinao village, also submitted an affidavit to the police to support the statements of Pasqui, Bautista and Hontano.

Pasqui said they were drinking that night in a bar and decided to light up some firecrackers when they saw stray dogs.

The police kept the comments of unidentified firecrackers found near the subdivision's gates as evidence.

Apologize

The three men said they wanted to apologize to the governor for what had happened.

Padaca, however, refused to accept the police's version of the incident. She said the incident could be a move to scare her due to her recent statements against "jueteng" operations in the province.

She said the incident would not discourage her from fighting jueteng.

"If my enemies think I was scared, sorry. But this does not mean I would not bust" up my security," she said earlier.

Elizabeth Visaya, mother of Bautista, said Padaca refused to believe the statements of her son and his two companions when they came to the Padaca's guesthouse office.

"I was ashamed in front of the police. [Padaca] told me does she believed [the story of] her security escorts more than other people's version of the incident. I told her that her security men should have looked for the suspects in the area before they fired their guns indiscriminately," said Visaya.

Bulaca earlier said her security aides heard three gunshots and one red flare (colored signal) at her house at past midnight Sunday.

She said her aides saw at least three men about 200 meters from her official residence and guesthouse.

Bulaca's aides fired at the men but it was not clear if anybody was hit. Police said the aides did not find any suspect.

PADACA

INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Editor Jon Bustos
Associate Editor Florante G. Solmoron

2 women presidents save old tree

By Marlon Ramos and Reynaldo G. Panay
Los Baños, Laguna

A CENTURY-OLD balete tree (Ficus nota) that has survived the ax and the wrath of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) campus has just gotten another lease on life, thanks to two women presidents: President Macapagal-Arroyo and UP President Emerlinda Roman.

On Thursday, Mr. Arroyo ordered Environment Secretary Michael Defensor to scrap all efforts to cut down the tree, which has been the subject of debate in the academic community for over a year. That same day, Roman promised to keep the balete tree.

UPLB Chancellor Wilfredo Dawalbaytes will be invited to take another swing at the tree in front of the Student Union Building despite the opposition of environmentalists and experts who have found it healthy and not hazardous to the environment.

As early as 9:30 a.m. on June 8, UPLB landscape architect Dr. Leonardo Dumaya was allegedly seen with six unidentified men in the area where the tree (Ficus nota) stands. One of the men reportedly told an alumnus that they were instructed to trim the upper branches of the tree on June 10 and to cut it down on June 11 or 12.

The men, it was learned, were employees of the Forest Products Research and Development Institute (FPRDI), an agency under the Department of Science and Technology. They were requested by Dawalbaytes to help prune the tree.

Gil Adlaf, a member of an alumni group opposing the felling of the tree, said they immediately called up a fellow alumnus, who he described as close to Mr. Arroyo, to ask the President to save the tree and to let enough be heritage trees of the university.

Hours later, Adlaf said the officials called up environment secretary Defensor and UPLB Dean's assistant Susan Aquino, to inform them that the President had accepted their request.

The officials, he said, also said Aquino's text message he received from Mr. Arroyo, which read: "I already instructed [Environment Secretary] Mike [Michael Defensor] to stop the cutting of the tree in UPLB."

When reached by the Inquirer's environment reporter yesterday, Defensor confirmed that he received the President's instructions. He said he sent a team of DENR technical men to UPLB to study the situation.

"We're happy because the instruction of the President was very free. It only showed the President's genuine concern for the environment. Despite the issues, she (she's having none)," Alfer said.

Vigilance

Aquino said she had also sought the help of Sen. Juanito Madrigal who had earlier accused Dawal and other university officials of being behind the illegal cutting down of trees inside UPLB.

Madrigal said she was attending a Senate session on Monday when she received a call on his cellphone requesting her of Dawal's plan.

She said she immediately called up Roman to ask Fe Orlo to blocking the plan. Roman gave her word to do what she could to save the tree, she said.

"I was glad because during our short conversation, Dr. Roman told me that she was understanding the concerns of those who oppose tree-cutting inside the UPLB," Madrigal said in a phone interview.

The senator admitted that Roman was very instrumental in stopping the supposed cutting down of the tree.

She said she explained to the UP president that the issue was not parochial to UPLB, but rather one of grave issues.

Last year, Madrigal filed a resolution in the Senate committee on environment to investigate the alleged anthurium "illegal logging" inside UPLB. Almost a year later, the committee has yet to start its inquiry.

THE ELEPHANT. "Ian" is to visit the Student Union building of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños. KONTIKI PANAY

The UPLB administration has denied Madrigal's accusations.

The senator assailed Defensor for his alleged inaccurate remarks on the issue. "The decision is a heritage not just of UPLB, but of the Filipino as well. The secretary should do his function to conserve the environment," she said.

Denial

Dumaya denied the tree-trimming by his men.

His assistant for academic matters, Maria Gabriela Guerrero, said the chancellor welcomes both official parties like us (the tree lovers) to a consultation meeting and could not spare even 10 minutes for an interview.

When asked about the supposed request of Dawal for FPRDI men to cut the tree, Guerrero said: "I don't think there is any request with respect to that tree."

"As far as I know, there is no such request, but I'm not [authorized] to talk about it," she added.

Josefina Go, director of the Office of Publications under the Office of the Chancellor, said she could not comment on the issue.

A letter obtained by the Inquirer showed that Dawal indeed asked FPRDI Director Florencio Ilustrisimo for "assistance in felling the tree now in front of the SU Building." Dated June 6, 2005, it was signed by the chancellor and was received by Ilustrisimo's office the next day.

"We understand that FPRDI is equipped with the required tools and expertise to perform such very specialized task.... We will provide the necessary manpower for this ancillary works related to this job...," Dawal wrote.

He added that "expert have diagnosed that tree to be weak." He said the tree was leaning 20 degrees to its side because of its history as a natural windbreak system.

"We look forward to accomplishing the task on June 9, 2005 before the start of classes," he said.

Upon receiving the request, Ilustrisimo Alvaro, FPRDI deputy director, said they immediately sent one of their personnel to attend a meeting with university officials.

"It is just a boundary for us to heed the request of the chancellor because we are occupying a property that UPLB owns," Alvaro said in an interview via text officer.

He, however, maintained that they never did a study on the tree to find out if it should be cut down.

Forester Fidelito Mendigoza, the FPRDI employee who met with the university officials, said he was being unreasonable to ridicule cutting from no tree cutting.

He admitted that UPLB officials failed to share any new coming presidents to the DENR.

Danger

Early last year, Dawal briefed the council over what his office was given permission by then DENR Secretary Elisea G. Gozun to cut the tree. Gozun considered her decision unfavorable canceled her order in July 2004, after receiving contrary opinions.

In his request to Gozun dated March 22, 2004, Dawal listed his reasons for his recommendation, including the "imminent danger [that the leaning tree may pose] on lives and properties."

Ramon A. Razal, head of the College of Forestry and Natural Resources (CFNR) said the tree was "ailing," "over mature," and "increasingly leaning." In turn would destroy the basement and could collapse anytime without warning and hence, needed to be cut down, he said.

Against Sadural, Dray Ong, a rural advocates saw the fact, asked for an expert letter to follow environmentalists that if the UPLB's findings were true, "why not apply the mail cut to heritage or safety-effective engine?"

To cut the tree should, I have to be as a matter of last resource, he said.

He questioned Dawal's plan to cut down the law in the absence of students and faculty members who, he said, had vociferously opposed this idea.

Sturdy

Environment experts in UPLB have found that the tree, although leaning, is sturdy.

Dr. Arturo Pelayo, an urban forester, told Inquirer that "The tree is hollow (about one-meter from the base) that is could be used if the top is pruned. It is not a hazard to the SU building and will not fall as alleged."

A similar position was taken by Director Celso B. Diaz of the ecosystems research and development Bureau.

"We recommend that the tree need should not be cut and instead the University shall apply the following measures: Prune the heavy crown of the tree and/or some big branches, and second, put a propping structure that will strengthen the position of the tree thereby reducing its leaning position, and preventing it from falling down."

Diaz contended that since the tree was old, strong winds coming from Mt. Makiling would hit the SU building unhampered.

The atmosphere around the building could also change significantly because there will be no more trees to absorb the heat, he said. Planting replacement would take a lifetime or generations of training he added.

The GARCI tapes:

SA LIKOD NG pagba-BALITA

Isang special report. Huwebes, alas 10 n.g. sa ABC

INQ INQ TV TV

Probers say bar slay suspect could be close to car owner's family

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WHILE they have yet to match a name with the face of the man suspected of killing a television executive in a Makati City bar a month ago, police investigators said they were close to pinning him down.

Luis Santiago was killed after a brawl broke out outside the V Bar on Ayala Avenue, Makati, on June 5.

A co-owner bar patron and a policeman were hurt in the incident.

"We are closing in on the suspect. We are getting there," said Chief Inspector Manuel Santos Jr., chief of the Makati Police Department Criminal Investigation Division.

Close relative?

Intense said their investigation was now focused on the possibility that the suspect was related to a certain Mandy, whose relatives of the family which had claimed ownership of a pickup that witnesses said was used by the suspect as a getaway vehicle.

Chain

The car — a months-old, heavily tinted Toyota Hi Lux was found "clean" Santos said the latest. The chain that the attorney did not know who took the vehicle from the garage was highly impossible.

"If you had a brand-new vehicle, would you leave the keys to somebody other than a family member?" he added.

On Friday last week, the Makati police had in its hands the 2005 model pickup, with plate number XDW 283, which they had traced to a house in Hillside Subdivision, Mahang, Mandaluyong City.

Turnover

The pickup is reportedly owned by Charito Angeles, who is out of the country.

The vehicle was turned over to the police by her mother Lydia.

Witnesses had told police that they saw the gunman, known only as Oliver, head toward the Toyota Hi Lux to retrieve the handgun he fired several times in the midst of a brawl as around 4 a.m. on Wednesday last week outside the posh bar night spot.

So far, police have come up with an artist's sketch of the suspect.

"I gave him the lowest time to speak with but no one could help us after three days," said Santos.

"Who else would have known the identity of the person who took the rebels that night than by an

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

METRO

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2 cops gunned down at fish market

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SIX MEN shot to death two policemen outside a crowded fish market in Malabon City Tuesday night.

Police identified the victims as PO2 Melton P. Bladulas, 43, a member of the local intelligence unit, and SPO1 Rodolfo Datiles, 42, of the PNP Bomb Data Center in Camp Crame.

According to investigators, Bladulas and Datiles were shot at about 10 p.m. in the middle of a crowd at the Malabon Fish Market on Rizal Avenue in Barangay Tañong.

The suspects approached the victims from behind and shot them in the head, police said.

Eldest son

Bladulas, the eldest son of former Malabon police chief and current city councilor Alfonso "Boning" Bladulas, died instantly.

Bladulas was the second son of Alfonso to die in the hands of assailants.

Datiles, who was hit 14 times, was brought by bystanders to the hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Witnesses told police the suspects took the lawmen's service firearms before they casually walked away and commandeered two tricycles which sped toward C-4 Road.

"The killing was skillfully done," said Malabon police director Chief Supt. Moises Espinosa.

The lawmen gathered that Datiles had just bought fish from the market when he was met by Bladulas.

The two men, who were both in casual clothes, were walking in the parking area of the market when the suspects struck.

Rebel-hitmen eyed

Guerrero said they were looking into reports that Bladulas and Datiles were gunned down by members of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), a breakaway group of the New People's Army.

The official said RPA-ABB members had been reported to be collecting extortionist's tax from vendors and stall owners.

"Regular police personnel in the Conniscation (Confiscated) could have hampered the Japanese's collection of illegal taxes," said Guerrero, referring to the confiscated cars.

A staff owner said different groups claiming to be members of leftist or rightist groups ask money from vendors.

Another angle being eyed by investigators is revenge.

"Bladulas's father was a barangay chief of police who, in the line of duty, could have stepped on the toes of some people who might have taken revenge on his son," he said.

Bladulas's father, whose life story had been limned into a movie, said in a television interview that after the death of his other son in 1998, he tried to dissuade Bladulas from entering the police force.

But he still insisted on becoming a policeman, "I'm consoled said.

Japanese shot in Pasig payroll rob

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

EMPLOYEES of an engineering firm were not the only ones waiting for their salaries yesterday... as more than armed robbers

In broad daylight, the four gunmen shot a driver and the finance manager of Yamato Engineering before taking some P500,000 cash.

Acting Pasig City police director Senior Supt. Cebot Beltran said the money could have been for June's payroll.

Police said Hitoshi Takahashi, 37, and driver Antonio Ilanan, 48, had just withdrawn the money from a bank when the incident happened at 2 p.m.

Ilanan and Takahashi, on board a white Nissan Bluebird, were stopped at the corner of Sheridan and Pioneer Streets by robbers on board two motorcycles, who came from behind.

Two of the robbers got off the motorcycles, pulled out .45-cal. pistols and opened fire on the victims.

One of the robbers opened the left door of the car and took the black bag containing the money.

The robbers immediately went back to their motorcycles and escaped, leaving the victims bleeding.

Ilanan sustained four gunshot wounds in the body while Takahashi suffered a gunshot wound in his left arm, police said.

Taxi driver Florante Dico, whose cab was right behind the victims' car, rushed to help the victims.

He brought Ilanan and Takahashi to the Medical City where they underwent treatment.

Police said Takahashi had been declared out of danger, but Ilanan remained critical as of yesterday afternoon.

Mandaluyong amends truck, car ban code

THE MANDALUYONG City government is giving trucks more time to pass through restricted roads in the city.

Not only that. Cars previously banned from city streets on certain days, based on the number coding scheme, can now pass through the city for a few hours.

The city council has amended the local motor vehicle code to embody the two new policies.

Previously, trucks were banned from selected streets from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

With the amendment, the ban now starts an hour later, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

In the morning, the old truck ban schedule stays. Trucks are banned from city roads from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Cargo trucks, gravel and sand trucks, and other trucks with eight wheels or more, whose gross vehicle weights exceed 4,500 kilograms, are included in the ban.

These trucks will only be allowed to use Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong Street, Boni Avenue, Kalentong Street, Ortigas Avenue, Nueve de Febrero Street and Agdipar Street during the hours outside the bans schedule.

In the same amendment, the city council also gave window hours from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the implementation of the Unified Mandaluyong Motorcycle Program.

Because of this, a car without license plate number ends, for instance, in 1 or 2 and was previously banned from the streets from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Mondays, can now go around the city every Monday during this time.

The ban remains from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and resumes at 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

In a statement, Mayor Hesiah Gonzales II said the changes "would primarily help to restore its livelity." Edson C. Tandoc, Jr.

SPORTS

Post or read your feedback in sportsinq@inquirer.com.ph/sportsinq@yahoo.com or (02) 896-6000 ext. 2833 (Voice)

E-mail: jc_juarez@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra

GOLF: 85 Open, First Round, 10 p.m., ESPN—The year's second major tees off at Pinehurst, North Carolina.

BASEBALL: MLB-8 a.m. (vs Phillies), ESPN—Cleveland Indians at Boston Red Sox

Schedules subject to change without prior notice

Sports TV

Compiled by L. Pangilinan

Shell raps P'foods, nears PBA semifinals

GAME TODAY | Ynares Center
6:45 p.m.—Alaska vs Purefoods
7:35 p.m.—Shell vs Coca-Cola

By Jun Mendoza

AN ERIE second-offensive spurt in the crunch time, Purefoods would need more than just a rare outside scoor from Marlon Melton.

The Hotdogs could not find any answer when Shell found the high-scoring Melton into a maze of moves and natural to the threshold of a comeback after with an 86-79 victory over Purefoods last night in the Commissioner PBA Fiesta Conference at the Ynares Center in Antipolo.

The most turnover-prone import with his 6.3 rebounds a game, Melton committed three of the 33 Hotdogs' late four mistakes in their final four possessions that practically handed the win to the Turbo Chargers once and more.

"We know that most of their attempts will come from Melton," said Purefoods coach Jun Mendoza, whose coach entered down to a semifinal showdown against top-seeded Talk N Text.

But it took 9 Melton, who keyed Purefoods' late-game surge with seven near Buffy in the scheduled plans, scraped with 29 points and 22 rebounds, but had eight of the team's 19 turnovers.

Ajani Williams assisted four of Melton's downs and had 27 points and 20 rebounds to lead Shell, which is seeking a second straight semifinal slot. Purefoods is looking to make it to the next round for the first time since 2000.

Meanwhile, Willie Miller of Talk N Text is leading the race for the best player of the conference season (with 1,270 statistical points. Mark Caguioa (1,062) and Eric Menk (1,054) of Barangay Ginebra had the statistical race for the MVP (Lights

WELCOAT'S Lee Magpayo tries to break free from Phoenix's Francis Marcaida and Erick dela Cuesta (7) in Game 2 of their best-of-five title series.

Welcoat guns for title anew

GAME TODAY | Araneta Coliseum
8:30 p.m.—Welcoat vs Phoenix
(Game 3 of best-of-five finals)

FACING the embarrassing prospect of getting swept out of the PBL Unity Cup finals series, Welcoat Jewels head coach Robert Jaworski told players needed all the motivation they could get against the determined Phoenix Pistons.

"I told the players my main thing is by winning Monday's first championship last conference," he said. "So why not make history again by coming back in this series? And it's good they responded as we did."

That decision still lives even as Welcoat tries to finish off Monday's series in Game 3 of the best-of-five series at 8:30 p.m. today at the Ginebra Araneta.

The Paintmasters needed just one more win to clinch their title title but the Jewels clearly came prepared and it showed in an 82-72 Game 2 triumph last Tuesday.

The Jewels dominated right from the tip-off with burly Jun Chan hitmaker drilling 20 points and grabbing 16 rebounds.

Alex Compton, the Jewels' marquee-scoring veteran guard, bailed on with injury to finish with 19 points.

Jaworski attributed the victory to the emphatic victory because the Jewels' confidence, is only assured that the Paintmasters still have the momentum.

"Every game is a no-nonsense game," he said. "Anytime they can finish us off, I'm sure they're going to make a move."

Welcoat still leads the series at 2-1, and Jaworski still needs to win two more games to lag to second straight title.

The task isn't impossible in 1998, Jaworski's Alaska Aces came back from a 0-2 deficit to claim the crown.

"We have to be extra patient offensively and defensively," said Welcoat coach Caloy Garcia. "We also have to stop Jeff Chan and Mick Pennisi." Photo by Jay Ganzon

UAAP weekend features Ateneo-La Salle rivalry

By Francis Ochoa

WHILE serving as a consultant for the Ateneo Blue Eagles, Norman Black has seen up close what a game against the De La Salle University Green Archers feels like.

"No doubt, it's intense," said the grand slam coach of the Philippine Basketball Association. "It's where the rivalry Green Dynamo and those old San Miguel Coaches Cup days."

"The alumni are involved and the students are so into it and that's what makes the atmosphere so different."

On July 10, amid a roaring sea of blue and green, Black will be literally in the middle of the Ateneo and La Salle cheering sections. And quite surprisingly, Black is also looking forward.

"I'm really not as concerned about the rivalry as I am about helping the team out," said Black.

Ateneo and La Salle clash at 4 p.m. on July 13, highlighting the opening weekend schedule of the UAAP's 68th season basketball wars at the Ateneo Coliseum.

On July 9, the league opens in non-season at 2 p.m. with the traditional parade of teams followed by a doubleheader featuring three of collegiate basketball's traditional heavyweights.

University of Santo Tomas, aiming to refine its run to the early '90s when it won four straight titles, takes on University of the Philippines at 2 p.m. while at 4 p.m., the Ateneo University and University of the East, which ruse a bulk of the eighties the league has handed out so far, take on each other.

The following day, four defensive battles for initial University at 2 p.m., preceding the 4 p.m. encounter between the Eagles and the Archers.

The teams' final lineups will be submitted to coaches.

A draft camp is expected to push the big game for the Ateneo-La Salle encounter, mostly because of the interest surrounding Black's appointments as head coach.

The inside titled season and he is gearing his team towards more offensive. Getting in shape and passing defense.

"The UAAP is a fast paced league, even if the scores don't show it," Black said. "That's why we want to be in the best shape that we can be once the season opens."

"Defensively, we want to stop other teams from executing what they want to execute and try to up tempo the game a little bit."

Ateneo will be led by spitfire guard LA Tenorio, shooter Magnum Membrere and big men R. Intal and Japeth Aguilar.

POC executive board keen on expelling cage body

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee executive board yesterday announced that it will recommend the blacklisting of the Basketball Association of the Philippines for "infringement" of the POC constitution and by-laws."

BAP chair Robert Jaworski said the BAP officials was suspended last May 25 for refusal of appearing regarding the banning of the national teams. "Our players little, if no respect, for the POC decision with a series of public pronouncements and actions."

The POC statement added that the BAP memo—published in its statement intention to field its own teams for the Southeast Asian Games and the SEA championship despite the POC's creation of an interim body and its subsequent election of officers—"run against the grain of supremacy."

"The BAP had been disrespectful of the POC suspension and, as a result, natural, arrogant in choosing but for as long as they are recognized by their international federations. They will continue to decide on the formation of our national teams to international events," said Iroquois.

But BAP executive vice president Christian Tan said they were merely doing what the POC wants. "They said there is a problem with our organization, so we need to reorganize by holding elections," Tan told the Inquirer.

With regard to international competitions, Tan said they are not bragging about the Filta merger. "But we are committed to send teams to international competitions with the best players."

"All we have for the good of basketball. We hold the decision to present something different to them [POC] because they said our organization is flawed."

Int'l 9-ball: Bata, Django ready

LUNEN: Dave Neves, Francisco Django Bustamante and Alex Pagulayan vow to defend the turf from foreign invasion when the Philippines hosts the World 9-Ball Championships gets under way on June 20-29 at the Robinsons Galleria Trade Hall.

The Dave are needed in the tournament along with 17 international pool stars. The main draw will be composed of 32 players, 12 coming from the qualifying round set on the first two days of competition.

World pool quartet Student Marlon Manalo and former 9-Ball Tour leg winners Candy Jellie and Roman Hooper are expected to cast their lots in the qualifiers.

"We'll show that the Filipinos are still the best in billiards," said Bata in a press conference held yesterday by the co-organizing Gilas Sports and Pepsi Sports at the Harbour City Restaurant in Makati City.

Ozamiz stakes clean slate versus Forward Taguig

OZAMIZ CITY—Southern Confidence leader Ozamiz makes its unblemished 5-forward when it meets Mindanao Conference pacesetter Forward Taguig today in a 2005 Philippine MBC cabling basketball championship game at the CP Tiaoguan here.

Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's Ozamiz rogues are slightly favored in the 6 p.m. contest due to the presence of 6-foot-3 veteran Billy Ramil and Christian Mendez.

Mayor Freddie Tingzon Taguig squad is out to spoil the party of the Cotta's needs.

Also vying in the tourney organized by Francisco Ayhporin Linco, Cebu Pacific, Philtranco, Spring Cooking Oil, Asoil, Molino, Far Eastern Insurance, Mariner's Spring, Mega Motorcycles, Skyline Solutions Provider, Rogen Trading-ton, Dominic Corp., Ying Ping Lechon, Rough Rider Jeans, Barrister Fish Hotel and Bobby Pizza-Cebu.

Over at the MEGAT gym in Mayor Oro, Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Cotabato team thinks their 4-0 win over the gallant Zamboanga del Norte's Dumblife at 6 p.m.

The Assistibles of Gov. Rolando Pelaez, Bayabig Mayor Roberto Uy and Dayahon Mayor Dominador Asturias Jr. will go all out in their bid to break into the win column.

Dumaco is enjoying its best start in the tourney. And so is Taguig, which joins the league on Northern Conference player of the month Jaco Villa to lift the team to its fourth victory in four games.

Taguig topped the Eastern Association-backed Caviter for its third win on May 31, while Dumaco toppled the Hondurlis, 94-87, to improve its record to 3-1 last May 21.

"Dumaco's front line is strong and my boys need to get more pressure inside and keep their shooters from scoring," said Taguig coach Danny Siviano.

MBC games are aired on MBC-4 at 4 p.m. every Sunday and on Prime Channel at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. daily.

SPORTSWATCH

Tabaco to be trained by Japanese ex-foe

LEGAZPI—Hiroyo Sakai hopes to bring former Mandaluyong middleweight champion Rolando Tabaco out East after he loses to boxing and sees, he will host his former foe, Cebu Kobayashi, in boxing office center Illinois. Tabaco, who is now managed by Japan's Kazu Matsuoka, said he will be accompanied with Japanese by CPPF executive manager Ang Bedel Lloyd, veteran also leadership with Kobayashi. **Alberto Lapanday Dalabador**

TM 9-Ball starts tour in Cebu tourney

CEBU CITY—The fourth season from the Super Balls Billiards Challenge, the biggest yearly 9-Ball tournament in the Queen City of the South, kicks off on June 23 at the SM City South Mall, Cebu. City's top cue masters, led by Warren Kiamco and Jeremiah "Dodong" Bautista, are guaranteed to have their undefeated contract this season. Two-time Olympian Ronnie Alcano, Lucilo Van Lorenzo and ranked fourth Jose "Super Bubbles" Mandanas, Antonio Bolado and Lee Hoh Gordon, Promising youngsters from the SB Philippine 9-Ball Development League will also be heading to Cebu for the event. The Ragang Mini Boys in cluster Richard "The Batman Boy" Agustin, Carlo Biado, Marcial Pano, Ernie Velasquez and "Jeff Bilis" de Leon.

La Salle vs SSC lady spikers today

La Salle and San Sebastian College clash again today at the close of the double-round elimination of the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. The Lady Archers and Lady eight-game winning streak conquest by the 8STT Igamers, 30-20, 30-28, 30-18, 21-24, last Monday. La Salle remained in first No. 1 spot in the team's record with a 9-1 slug over the Lady Stags. The La Salle-SSC encounter is set at 5 p.m. San Sebastian holds an 8STT 6-3 win.

Tagaytay chessers lead team event

ILOILO CITY—Tagaytay City boardmen Toni and Jessie City in Rosario 2 and 1 in the first round, by beat Ilo-Ilo 8STT Bishop's Jayson Jesus Nacario and Ilo-Ilo's Reginald Abdey Toni. GM Joey Antonio then met with Henry Lopez while Rodolfo Ponagsa Dalmonte Bolao and Allen Dilacado overcame members Jose Tagaytay's 4.5-3.5 victory. Antonio, Ramiel MBC Prospect Cup on while Dalino bested Reynaldo Galicano in Tagaytay's 3-2 victory over Bacolo. Ponagsa and Manalo rubbed his chosen. The home team gave Tagaytay 6.5 victory in the team's record with a 9-1 slug over the Lady Stags. The La Salle-SSC encounter is set at 5 p.m. San Sebastian holds an 8STT 6-3 win.

Mayor Laurena Cruz, Iloilo vice-Governor Raul Gallo and sports director Freddie Gina are among the prime movers of the provincial team tournament.

HUGTTSTLED driver Renan Morales (center shirt, center) and his pit crew celebrate the double victory in the third and fourth rounds of the National Junior Touring Championship.

Morales scores double triumph at BRC

PEMBRE, Batangas—Renan Morales scored the third and fourth rounds of the National Junior Touring Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit to continue his double-victory streak. Morales struggled with a close victory in the NJTC, fishing 32.1 LOTO to top Fernan Quintos (32.16, 342) by a second. Manuel Lozada and Rogelio Sison were third and fourth in the opening round. The 2 contenders for the series' championship, Morales and Formula 5 star clocked the fastest lap time in the event, fishing 2:06.709 to top Y. "I'm just trying to continue what we began last season," said Morales, who is sponsored by Pangasinan Redevelopment Corporation. Limchiac, Country side Pension Hotel and Delfi Racing. Morales posted his most impressive showing to the 48 lap race, finishing in 1:27.0 000 and beating Marcelino Sison by seven seconds.

World Slasher Cup semifinals today

ANTIPOLO—Local is expected at the six-contestant (Asian) Oldmobile as the "NCA World Slasher Cup 8-Cock Championship Derby" enters its semifinal round at 9 a.m. today. Cleaners 10,000 all-cash prize contest to the quarterround Tuesday night, when 72 local and international cockers and breeders saw action. Defending champion Joseph Bukok of Alabama and Jan Sandrapan were among the early qualifiers who posted two victories Tuesday night. Bukok (8 and Bolinga) again fielded their lucky cocks, Joe Boddy Boardwalker '23, Mar with Bukok and Sandrapan. Scoring Lagarto and Bandila Gaza Boardwalker (Blue Blood Farms), Bobby Lee—Golden Circle 3 (Florida), Andrew Bilog Ferrer (Pembroke), and Jan Boardwalker (Salvador Cosmopolitan). Bilog bounced by Big Circle owner Jorge "Boss" Acosta, Jan Santiago and Jan. By Viernes, the cockfest is expected to be the "Champion of Cockfighting."

Religon 6-cocker entries near 200

POLLOK, Mayor Cockpit's "Masters In Top-Site 8-Cock Derby" slated on July 4, 5, 6, 11 and 12, continues to draw participants from the provinces and as close to the number of conference sites is nearing the 200 mark. Included in the talented roster of contestants are Bobby Jardin, Tony Sandoz, engineer Pete Ramirez, Boy Asuncion, Raul Torres, Ernie Mallari, Alex Magsaysay, Benny Abdu Rhaj, Godfrey Gamboa, Jr., Ben Tumbaga, Jose Perez, Jeff Agustin, Jr. Cockpit (0977) and Ben Ilar are solely the (0915) 000, 000-0275, 000—9908 and 000-9907.

Gamefowl Breeding and Cockfighting

WORLD Slasher Cup (Ilar Soldiers Boy Ilar vs. Bill Bolanos) and Williams Gun Solid Cock) will make their appearance in separate matches in the event "Gamefowl Breeding and Cockfighting" seminar. This event is part of the Thunderbird Promotions Corporation. The seminar is set at the Big Dome's gamefowl Saturday starting at 8 a.m. For details, call 911-6001 loc. 7137 contact for Randy Lim.

FAITS CHAMPS. Faits has not taken the recently held to this 54-ball tournament with Ronald Salvador (left) and King Maldonado (right) managing an event's and ladies' caliber. While there is Rita manager Ronnie Lopez. Faits, honored as Manila Senator, Makati, will hold a tourney for club members on July 2.

MALARAYAT TILT

Garcia leads Senior Am

By Manny Castillo

LEMA, CITY—Rickie Garcia had an up-and-down second nine scenario he played for the first time yesterday, signing for an even par 71 that was good for a three-shot lead over Rudy Sison after 18 holes of the 2005 Philippine Senior Amateurs.

The 50-year-old Garcia had five birdies and the same number of bogeys on the windswept Malarayat, the swing is very a potent lid-ish put around after flubbing close birdie putts in two of his last three holes.

Garcia, the winner in 2002, took a three-shot advantage over Vitas, who had a 40-35 and entered by a double bogey 6 on the ninth.

He also tied total debut players Rudolfo Ilan Lalo and Iggy Gervacio for four and defending champion Francis Garcia and Calvo Garcia-Sandia, another former amateur by four.

"It worked to my advantage playing here for the first time," said Garcia, adding to opponent Ramon Sison, "I don't know if my opponents were nervous but I think long and hard about my shots. I just played it fairways and greens and it paid off."

Garcia opened up with a 41 and rammed his round with an eagle 3 on the finishing hole, a short par 5 where he needed just a 6-iron to land his second shot to within inches of the hole.

"It's just nice to watch as play because this course suits me. I've been together again," Garcia said. "I just want to have a good time with my buddies out there."

WGAF vice president Danny Flores shot a 78 for solo seventh spot, one ahead of Jose Nepomuceno who with Jimilo Obsenna and Ben Hapunan rounding out the top 10 after identical 80s.

The tournament is being presented by ICTSI and San Miguel Corp. and hosted by Alabang Country Club and Jose Concepcion Golf and Country Club.

FVR hits the ceremonial drive to open the 2005 Philippine Senior Amateur Championships. MGA president Benny Lopez, vice-president Danny Flores and secretary general Lolito Fernandez and Malarayat's Mike Cary and Kat Kalaghan look on.

Southwoods, Wack Wack share top

Standings after Day 1 (par)

Jill Rose Dalusol (+4-1), Rona Mia (+4-1), Sandra Angel (+2), Jessica Ng (+1), Shirley Li (+1), Jessica Lee (+1), Jessica Lee (+1), Jessica Lee

IBM ThinkPad R50e
AMTI

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
B1
BUSINESS

Gov't defers roadshow; peso still weak

WHAT'S INSIDE

OFW remittances up 17.2% in 1st 4 months
B2

New lease on life eyed for SPV law
B5

Telco execs see no serious damage yet from upheaval
B4

2.9M Filipinos jobless as of April
B3

By Michelle V. Rieza

THE GOVERNMENT'S economic team has decided to postpone the international roadshow slated this month as the controversies broadening the Arroyo administration could raise the country's credit image.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the economic team still intended to push through with the roadshow although a key act to decide on the exact date. Only the other day, the government said the roadshow would continue since foreign investors were expected "to see through the (political) noise."

The roadshow, which was originally set for one-and-half weeks starting June 21, was aimed at updating investors from Europe and the United States on the positive developments on the local front.

In particular, the economic team was hoping to inform foreign investors of the passage of key revenue-raising bills like the expanded value-added tax, and the implementation of administrative measures to improve the fiscal situation. Last April, the national government posted a budget surplus of P32.2 billion, the first time in four years.

But while investor confidence in the country was being boosted by progress on the fiscal situation, analysts said it had been slightly dragged by the current political uncertainty.

Controversies involving the presidency have already caused the peso to tumble and the stock market to plummet. Yesterday the peso closed at 55.26 to a dollar from 55.27 on Tuesday, after it hit a record low of 55.34 on Monday.

The peso's weakness has been blamed on the political crisis, which has also caused the stock market to plunge to its lowest level in more than two

OFW remittances up 17.2% in 1st 4 months

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOLLARS sent home by overseas Filipino workers through banks rose by 17.1 percent in April to $766 million from a year ago.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer-in-Charge Armando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said the April figure brought the total inward remittances in the first four months of the year to $3.1 billion, or 17.2 percent higher than last year.

Tetangco said the steady increase in foreign exchange remittances was fueled by the double-digit growth in OFW deployment, as well as the improved efficiency and aggressive marketing of the banks' remittance services.

"The overall trend continues to be positive as the overseas workers is duly acknowledged for their significant contribution to the economy," Tetangco said.

The governor cited the steady increase in foreign exchange remittances was facilitated by the double-digit growth in OFW deployment, as well as the improved efficiency and aggressive marketing of the banks' remittance services.

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Tetangco said

2.9M Filipinos jobless as of April

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE UNEMPLOYMENT rate stood at 8.4 percent in April as 2.9 million of the country's labor force were considered jobless, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The NSO said the April figure was based on the newly adopted definition of "unemployment." The NSO said there are now three criteria in considering an individual as unemployed: a person who is at least 15 years old and is (1) reported as jobless, (2) is available for work, and (3) seeking work or not seeking work due to valid reasons.

The NSO said that if the old definition of "unemployed" were used, the unemployment rate would stand at 12.9 percent or 4.79 million. The figure would be lower than the 13.7 percent (5 million) recorded in April 2004.

The old definition only had two criteria: (1) without work and (2) looking for work, including those not seeking work with valid reasons.

According to NSO data, more or 49 percent of the unemployed were young individuals aged 15 to 24 years old, which cover those who just graduated from college. It said 28.3 percent were aged 25 to 34 years old, and the rest were above 35 years old.

The NSO also said that the National Capital Region posted the highest unemployment rate at 14.4 percent. Other regions that had double-digit unemployment rates were: Region III (Central Luzon) at 11.4 percent and Region IV-A (Calabarzon) at 11.1 percent.

The government agency said that of the 2.9 million unemployed, 1.1 million (38.5 percent) actually graduated from college. Some 1.5 million, or 51.8 percent, graduated from high school, and 98,000, or 35.8 percent, have reached the elementary level.

Of the 2.9 million unemployed, 1.4 million said they were jobless not because they chose or has because they could not find any job available for them. They added, according to the NSO survey, that they looked for jobs either by directly approaching employers or by seeking assistance from employment agencies.

But almost 1.5 million unemployed persons, or 52.7 percent of total unemployed, did not really look for work. Those who did not look for jobs either said they believed there was no available work for them, were still waiting for results of previous job applications, were already too tired job-hunting, were waiting to be rehired, or were disabled or had temporary illness.

President Macapagal Arroyo, whose ratings are at record lows as Filipinos complain about rising inflation and pervasive corruption, has promised to create 6 million to 10 million new jobs before the end of her term in 2010.

Underemployment is also a major problem in the country, with millions working only part-time or in jobs below their skills and education.

Some 8 million Filipinos have left for better opportunities abroad. The $6 billion they send home each year is a key source of fund for the economy, but some analysts say the migration is starving the country of doctors, nurses and other professionals.

PNOC unit seeks partner for Negros exploration project

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC), the country's biggest geothermal energy producer, is seeking a partner to conduct mineral exploration and assessment work in Southern Negros.

In a published bid invitation, the state-firm said prospective partners should be "accredited for the purpose of engaging in mining, with technical and financial capability to undertake mineral resources development."

The company should also have a minimum authorized capital stock of P30 million and a minimum paid-up capital of P25 million.

Due to the project's high degree of technicality, prospective partners should have at least two geologists with a minimum of five years of professional experience. The geologists' credentials as well as the company's track record in mining operations and environmental management should also be submitted together with the bid.

In the case of a corporation, it should be a holder of an exploration permit, a mineral agreement or a financial or technical assistance agreement.

PNOC-EDC accepted letters of intent (LOIs) and eligibility documents from interested partners up to 5 p.m. of June 23. The state firm, however, declined to disclose how many entities submitted their LOIs, as well their identities.

Parties deemed eligible to bid will be required to submit their financial proposal in two separate sealed envelopes. All bids must also include a bid security that will be callable on demand and valid for 120 days from the date of bid opening.

If in cash, cashier's check, manager's check or certified check, the bid security should be at least P1.38 million. If in the form of a bank guarantee, it should be at least P2.06 million. If in the form of a surety bond, the security should amount to at least P9.49 million.

The financial proposal and bid security will be accepted until 2 p.m. on July 5. Bids will be opened immediately after, in the presence of bidders' representatives.

PNOC-EDC produces more than 40 percent of the country's geothermal energy capacity.

Telcos see no serious damage yet from political concerns

By Clarissa S. Rocero

WHILE the scrap political situation has not caused any serious damage so far, failure to address the issue quickly could prove lethal to foreign exchange and investor interest and the confidence of investors and creditors, according to businessmen.

Lance Gokongwei, president of JG Summit Corp., which has interests in telecommunications, airlines and banking, said that any lingering uncertainty could put pressure on business.

"Right now, it has not affected us," said Gokongwei, "but anything that increases the perceived uncertainty will tend to have a very serious impact."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. President Napoleon Nazareno agreed that the exchange rate would be crucial to his company considering that for every peso that the local currency would shed, PLDT would incur about P1 billion in losses.

"At the moment, we don't see any major impact on operations except for the forex and share prices," said Nazareno.

Globe Telecom Inc. president Fernando Zobel de Ayala said that his company was still on a business-as-usual mode.

"As of now, we are not seeing any direct impact on our operations," he said in a text message.

But even before the political upheaval, Ayala had been worried over the impact of rising inflation and higher rates.

PLDT chairman Manuel Pangilinan, on the other hand, said that companies have to "look through the political situation."

ABLAZA

NAZARENO

GOKONGWEI

"We are still complete. We have to be. This is our country," said the PLDT chair.

The telecom giant is targeting a net income of P27 billion this year against P25 billion last year.

Pangilinan said the company's earnings could even top P30 billion.

So far, the impact of the uncertainties would be confined on foreign exchange.

"The peso has depreciated compared to other currencies in the first quarter. We have given up some of our exchange gains," said Pangilinan.

The carrier is one the all-time companies with foreign borrowings.

PLDT has almost $2 billion in debts.

He said it would be too early to say whether the current political turmoil would make it more difficult for the likes of PLDT to hit its target.

"The fact that investments are growing, especially on the cellular side. I think one transferee to the second quarter are better than the first quarter. It looks like June is ahead of May," added Pangilinan.

PLDT's core earnings stood at P7 billion in the first three months, including non-core gains due to a strategic gain in the fiber quarter, for profits totaled P9.4 billion.

Gokongwei said the uncertainties must be addressed and declining confidence should be arrested.

"There are positives (things) like the passage of the (value-added tax)," the JG Summit official said.

For now, the best thing for businesses to do would be to cut costs and find ways to grow revenues.

"We are proceeding with business as usual given all the competitive challenges we are facing," said Gokongwei.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO THE DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF LILIO (Laguna), INC.

1. The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) will start its operations for the sole purpose of liquidating the closed Rural Bank of Lilio (Laguna), Inc. (the Bank) on Friday, June 17, 2005.

2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the following premises of RBLI and file their claims with the PDIC representatives during office hours, Monday to Friday, to wit:

RBLI Banking Unit	Payoff Site	Duration of Payoff
Head Office	Head Office Poblacion III, Lilio, Laguna	June 17 to July 15, 2005
Calauang Extension Office	Calauang Ext. Office Brgy. Calauang, Lilio, Laguna	June 17 to July 5, 2005
Sta. Cruz Branch	Sta. Cruz Branch Gen. Luna corner A.P. Borgos Sts., Sta. Cruz, Laguna	June 17 to July 5, 2005
Santiago Extension Office	Head Office Poblacion III, Lilio, Laguna	June 17 to July 15, 2005
Magdalena Branch	Magdalena Branch J. Rizal cor. A. Bonifacio Sts., Magdalena, Laguna	June 17 to July 7, 2005

After the bank closed, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Claims Counter, 8th Floor, SSS Building, Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Obena St., Makati City from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or by mailing:

The Manager
Claims Processing Department
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
PDIC Head Office Premises
1021 Makati City

3. Depositors are enjoined to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Identification evidence or deposit such as Savings Passbook, Certificate of Time Deposit or Bank Statement indicating account charges.
   b. Two (2) valid identification cards (with documents duly valid) with depositor's signature.

Other documentary aids, to be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing of claims files.

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended by R.A. 9302, this last day for filing claims by covered depositors in the closed Rural Bank of Lilio (Laguna), Inc. is on June 16, 2005. After June 16, 2005, PDIC, as trustee, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits, notwithstanding with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

MSH LEAD

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

Local Enhancement and Development (LEAD) for Health Project

Management Sciences for Health, Inc. (MSH) is a consortium funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) started to implement the LEAD for Health Project. The LEAD for Health project is a three year project that will support government procurement and management of family planning and selected health services (TB, HIV/AIDS and Vitamin A supplementation) and improve Pre-service and Training for these services. The project will establish contraceptive logistics management information system (LMIS) in the Philippines, particularly in cities with selected pilot sites, in order to improve contraceptive availability, especially the poor, for family planning, TB and other selected health services. The project will accomplish these goals by (a) strengthening the Philippine Pharmaceutical Procurement Service (PPPS) capacity (LBUs & distributor/PP, TB and other selected health services, (b) developing and implementing a logistics management information system (LMIS), improved supply and distribution mechanisms at both the national and local levels to finance and support these programs. Procurement of technical assistance will help the LGUs develop commitment to and ownership of the project.

MSH invites local and international organizations to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the provision of technical assistance for the project in the coverage areas all over the country. Interested organizations must provide information such as company profile, brochure, descriptions/experience of similar assignments, resumes of prospective resource within the country detailing expertise, potential and/or municipal engineering, feasibility of appropriate offers in writing until July 30th, 2005 must be in writing and addressed to the address indicated below no later than 27 June 2005.

Procurement Specialist-Contracts (PSC) Unit
Suite 1101 Phi. Nationalist Building
459 T.M. Kalaw corner Gorordo Streets, 6th fl., Manila, Philippines
Tel. No. (632) 536-9477
Fax. No. (632) 521-0027
Email: pscmanager@lead.org.ph

All EOIs shall be evaluated by MSH and only qualified organizations shall be invited for a pre-bid conference scheduled on a later date. Pre-qualified organizations shall be provided with bidding documents. The pre-bid conference shall be convened to discuss the details and questions pertaining to the bid documents.

MSH reserves the right to reject any or all Application for Pre-qualification, waive any required formality therein, and accept the bid and award the submitted or to the most advantageous offer to the project. MSH reserves the right, without incurring any liability whatsoever to inform the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of the bids, for there if submitted or award will be made.

(Sgd.) Jane De Dios

BOI approves mass housing projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments announced yesterday that it had approved two mass housing projects to be developed in Cavite and Cagayan worth some P1.694 million in total.

According to the BOI, Grand Metro Inn Inc. would invest P382 million in its project dubbed Ciudad Pangasay Subdivision in Trece Martires City in Cavite.

CMMV plans to build 2,830 units of low-cost housing serving 14,147 square meters of land.

The package price of the houses range from P225,000 to P400,000 and would be sold through Pag-ibig financing.

CMMV's major stockholders include Batores Insurance & Management Corp. and Ilaw-condeve Corporation.

Ciudad Pangasay is geared toward the low- and medium-income earners in private and government agencies in Trece Martires and neighboring towns, especially those working in the technology parks.

Filipino Builders Development Corp., meanwhile, has earmarked P1.6 million for the development of the Ciudad Grande Subdivision Phase I B along the national highway in Bacolor town in Pampanga.

The draft funds involves 149 low-cost units that would be built in a 2.6-hectare parcel of land.

The flagship unit of Firm Builders Group, FBDDC was established in 1992 to focus on socialized housing projects.

The company has so far completed the development of 20 low-cost housing subdivisions covering a total area of 226.6 hectares and 9,250 housing units.

These projects are mostly located in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Trade Secretary Juan D. Santos said the perks and other incentives were being given to low-cost housing projects as part of the government's program on shelter program.

"By providing incentives to realty and construction firms, we make the business of low-cost mass housing attractive to investors," Santos explained.

T-bond rates down 6 bps

By Michelle V. Remo

FIVE-YEAR Treasury bond rate dropped by 6 basis points to 10.83% percent yesterday, as the market preferred medium-term over short-term government securities amid the current political turmoil.

The bonds, however, is due next decade, showed strong appetite for the five-year T-bond.

"Traders for the government security reached P6.46 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P4 billion.

The auction of Treasury's auction committee accepted all tender worth of bids, thus raising to full borrowing schedule amounting P4 billion.

The slight decline in the rate of the five-year T-bond was a reversal of the rise in the 91-day Treasury bill rate last Tuesday.

The rate for the 91-day T-bill, a benchmark used by banks in pricing loans, increased by 9.3 basis points to 5.704 percent.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company were Jaime Z. Ongpin, Fabian S. Dee, Ray C. Espinosa, Isidro Abel Kapunan L. Nazareno, Manuel V. Pangilinan, Corazon S. de la Paz, Albert F. del Rosario and Shigeru Yoshida. Independent directors are Emmanuel F. Buhain, Oscar S. Reyes, Pedro E. Roxas and Ernesto T. Sy-Cocon.

ELECTED directors of Elle & Land Development Inc. were Mrs. Milagros Puzon Jr., Wladimir C. Rivera, Dr. Andrew I. Lucero, Grace C. Lucero, Rosario C. Flores, Pedro Dee and Alice C. Sobre.

MEGA Philippine Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 25, 3 p.m. at the Bel Pilar Room, The Legazpi Suites, 68 Rufino cor. Salcedo Streets, Legazpi Village, Makati. Stockholders of record as of May 27 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting. Estefanía Urbina R. Bartolomé, PR Manager

New lease on life eyed for SPV law

By Michelle V. Rivera

IT IS with a sense of urgency that the country's banks trust the Special Purpose Vehicle Act (SPV) law extended. Apparently, the four-year duration of the law, which expired last April, was not enough to unload the bulk of the estimated P600 billion in non-performing assets (NPAs) that have been weighing down on the industry.

The SPV law, which granted local investors to commissions related to the sale of NPAs to special purpose vehicles, was unable to encourage thwarted institutions to unload their crucial assets, which have been cited as one of the biggest hurdles that hinging the growth of the banking sector.

The final extension, aside from 50-percent discount on registration and transfer fees, also includes exemption from several taxes, including documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax, creditable withholding income tax, and value-added tax.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, only 17 percent, or P92 billion, of the total NPAs of the industry were sold to SPVs within the four-year deadline of the law.

Because the BSP set no sum of its own, the banking industry's NPL ratio peaked at 16 percent at the height of the Asian financial crisis that began in 1997.

It has recently improved to 11.6 percent after the banking industry unloaded some P92 billion in troubled loans. But Espenilla said the NPL ratio is still relatively high.

He said what was ideal was to bring down the NPL ratio down to the 5-percent level, the level the banks were at before the crisis occurred. It was he recalled that the crisis took its toll on the banking sector, as other industries, especially the real estate, could no longer service their huge liabilities from banks.

PURUSHA

Heated debate

The politicability of extending the SPV law by another two years, however, is being questioned in the light of the country's fiscal problems. The government has been reportedly agreeing to close fiscal incentives, such as tax exemptions, as it needs all the money it can collect.

The Department of Finance, given the daunting task of solving the country's fiscal problems, was initially cool to the idea of extending the SPV law, but it later agreed, given the strong lobbying by the banking sector and the BSP's support for the extension of the SPV law.

The BSP said it was unfavorable to the proposed extension of the law, but that it should only be for one year, instead of the proposed two years. It later agreed to a 2-year extension.

While agreeing with the two-year extension, the BSP however suggested that the price should only cover loans that were approved on or before Jan. 10, 2005, the date when the original SPV law took effect.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said allowing two more years for banks to avail themselves of tax incentives was good, as long as there was limit on the coverage of loans.

"We need to emphasize that the SPV issue should be looked at in a one-time opportunity to fix the NPL problem and not as a quick-fix tool that can be tapped to address the NPAs of banks from time to time," Purisima said.

Tax incentives

According to DOF estimates, the government gave up about P700 million worth of tax incentives during the two years that the SPV law was in effect. Should the law be extended, the government's revenue losses could hit over P2 billion, the DOF said.

Aside from the potentiality of getting out tax perks amid the ongoing fiscal problems, the DOF also questioned the eagerness of banks to have the law extended when they did not fully take advantage of it during its effectivity. By the year, more than the SPV law was in effect, the amount of bad assets sold did not even reach 20 percent of the total amount of NPAs of the banking industry.

In the past, the BSP acknowledged banks did not show much appetite for the SPV law. Espenilla said banks did not sell their bad assets until only the few months before the law was set to expire. But the underlying of banks was underestimated.

"It really took a long time before banks fully understood the benefits of the Law," Espenilla said. He said the delay in appreciation of the new fund in line with the cost banks have to give up in selling their bad assets to SPVs. Under transactions related to sale of NPAs to SPVs, the bad assets are sold at a steeply discounted price equivalent to 20 to 30 percent of the original value of the assets.

Now that banks already appear set the benefits of selling their bad assets under the package of getting tax exemptions, Espenilla said, they are expected to hasten the unloading of their NPAs once the SPV law is extended.

The Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP), responding to criticisms over banks' delayed response to the SPV law, said the proposed extension is long time.

Delayed response

BAP executive director Jaysidi Coronel said the DOF's initial proposal to have the SPV Law extended for only one year would not be enough to help the banking industry significantly improve their balance sheets.

The BAP also had, originally lobbied for a three-year duration of the SPV law, but they too agreed with two years after seeing the difficulty of having its request granted due to the government's poor fiscal situation.

"It takes time to negotiate. It is not easy to ask [government] to [which] has the banks' bad assets] are beginning to appreciate this," he said.

Coronel also argued that the low turnover of the law's implementing rules and regulations was the reason for the delayed response of banks to the SPV law. He stated that the IRR was issued only six months before the SPV law was to expire.

"Some banks were waiting for the IRR because transactions would be based on it details," he said.

The banking industry said all kinds of support the government could give to improve its competitiveness were important, but that the BAP was not expecting much from the fiscally troubled government.

Coronel said other banks simply wished for one to have the SPV law extended.

In other countries where the banking sector also suffered from huge bad debts, the governments took greater efforts to revive the industry. Banks in crisis-ridden Indonesia, for instance, the government bailed out their banks by buying their bad assets.

Espenilla said the issue of the Indonesian and Korean governments to bail out their banks is wrong as NPL ratios, which peaked at 40 percent during the crisis years, already surpassed the ratios in the third emerging markets.

The BSP official said the Philippine government could not afford to do the same because its economy was still grappling with its budget problem. Extending the SPV law, however, was something the Philippine government should be able to afford, he said.

CORONEL

Bangko Sentral seen easing bank reserve requirement in '06

By Doris C. Dantes

REMEMBERING the tightening since the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas can, sometime in the second quarter next year, ease the reserve requirement on banks' maturing asset ones.

"We would like to be able to gradually relieve the reserve requirements in the medium-term and in a manner that would not affect our price or exchange stability," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex) forum yesterday.

At the same time, it would be important for further inflation-studied-oriented instruments as a means of improving the implementation of monetary policy," he said.

Tetangco said the planned reduction in the reserve requirement would not likely happen within the next six months.

"We'll see if we would start bringing it down by next year," he told reporters after his speech.

The reserve requirement, along with the overnight borrowing rate, is a BSP tool used in mopping up excess liquidity in the financial system. The BSP last increased the reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and quasi-banks by two percentage points to 19 percent in February 2004, as a preemptive response to Oanda fearing from the sharp peso depreciation then.

"We already started reducing the rate on reserve requirement ratios in the 1997 financial crisis," Tetangco said, noting that in other countries, such requirement was only at about 10 percent.

He said the pace at which the reduction in the reserve requirement would happen would depend on three things: the country's inflation path, demand for money and the availability of market-oriented instruments.

"If there's a reduction or downward trajectory in the inflation path, that can be a factor that may allow reductions in the reserve requirement," he said.

By next year, the BSP expects the inflation rate to fall within the government ceiling after overshooting targets last year and, most likely, this year too.

VICTORIAN

NOTICE OF LOSS

VICTORIAN MILLING COMPANY, INC., Victorias City, Negros Occidental would like to inform the public of the loss of the signature samples of Mr. Alejandro G. Sugay, President and Miss Fenando V. Sagar, Controller, last June 7, 2005.

The last valid VMC computerized checks bearing the samples signatures of the abovementioned officers have the following numbers:

East West Bank Manila	027017
Equitable PCIB Victorias	000287

All subsequent computerized checks and any other bank checks including VMC Sugar Quedans and VMC Wholesale Storage Receipts (WSR) bearing the samples signatures of the above VMC signatories should not be honored.

In the same manner, any checks bearing the signature samples of Mr. Alejandro G. Sugay and Mr. Nilo A. Ferrera should likewise not be honored.

(Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN
Controller

Rules for power retailers readied

By Abigail L. Ho

IN ORDER of P200 billion annual consumption and upon access, the Energy Regulatory Commission has drafted the ground rules on how technically and financially capable entities can become retail electricity suppliers (RES).

According to the draft guidelines on securing RES licenses, qualified entities can supply electricity to the "contestable market" once retail competition and open access is declared.

"Contestable market" refers to electricity end-users who are given the right to choose their own power suppliers. For a person or organization to qualify as a RES, financial and technical capabilities must be proven.

On the financial aspect, a license applicant should have one of the following to prove its financial capability: an investment-grade credit rating by a recognized credit institution; unused cash resources equivalent to the expected monthly billings or at least P10 million; or a proof of creditworthiness as confirmed through confirmations by firms that have extended credit to the applicant, including generation firms, the National Transmission Corp. and distribution utilities.

On the technical side, an applicant must be able to enter into transaction arrangements or other required contracts with one or more distributors, secure generators through compliance with all requirements of "fairness and the market operator; meet commercial requirements with the market operator or its contractual obligations with any industry participant; and have adequate staff training to meet all service commitments.

An applicant for a RES license, including any of its stockholders, directors, officers or those people's relatives up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, must not own any direct or indirect interest in Transco or its related concessionaire.

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY ... THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

Hooray for Humphrey!

Parallel 45 in Mandaluyong is the enchanting 'bouchon' type restaurant where chef Navarro makes his culinary dreams come true

CHEF Humphrey Navarro

THERE are some things that you expect of certain people.... Great art from museums, memorable jewelry and gems from Bond, music to lull to love with from Celine, heavenly food from Harvard.

On July 15, all roads will lead to 871 Bank Street in Mandaluyong as chef Humphrey Navarro opens P45 (literally so!). This is the culmination of all his dreams, a reflection of all that he is and an enchanting new home for us to experience the magic of Humphrey cuisine.

So, what is P45? It's a "bouchon" type of a restaurant and wine cellar that features classical cuisine done with modern flair or, simply put, restored Humphrey style!

Since he narrated his stories to me, I've been so excited and deceptive as he is, letting me taste appetizers (which by the way, are mostly comfort food wonders): Penne Diavolo of Sun Cove, Three Scallops four ways, Steak Lobster four ways, Tartare four ways, Caesar to a Basket with Duck Liver Croutons and, of course, the signature P45 dish, a pool of mixed shellfish with Chili Aioli.

Four the sweet finish of his fabulous offerings made me lips ball-out two inches: Selection Belgian Wow-ties Chocolate Pudding with Bisbon Peanut Butter is a must-try! Go and eat, I guess, are one-dish has everything about the affair.

Most of what's on the menu are dishes that have never been created before and are certain to satisfy even the most discriminating of palates. As if the menu isn't hard enough to digest, there can well be tasting menus each name for lunch, the dishes for which be decided on the Sunday market purchase for the day. Truly P45 is to discuss the new dining trend in Manila!

My dear Humphrey, [illegible] you've remained a "cook," as you so fondly refer to yourself, one who is full of humility to me, ever so gentle, kind and humble of spirit. Know that I remain extremely happy for you and all you've achieved! I am pleased that you are soon to unveil your skill to the world, to create more surprises that will allow everyone to experience the magnificence of your God given gift. So I shall see you there, as I intend to be here in time, to enjoy excellent food and to celebrate the success of P45! Congratulations, my friend!

Most requested

Much as we love gourmet food, the voice of the hard screams for comfort food. So here are the answers on your requests.

The clamor for a Salpicao recipe has been equally as deafening as the clamor for the roulbacks of grandma-penned Thai dish is perhaps the No. 1 most requested recipe on Diabetes Recipes. Its Bang, Tom, Cavaliers, Abet, Bbc, Cruz, Sora Aimee, etc ... (okay, Sora Aimee is pushing it), here it is.

Salpicao

2 + 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1/3 c garlic, thinly sliced or chopped fine
1 dried chili or pinch of pepper flakes (optional)
250 g tenderloin (cubed ½ inch)
2 tsp Lea and Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
½ tsp salt, to taste
½ tsp pepper, freshly cracked, to taste

In a pan, heat up 2 tbsp olive oil, add garlic and chili. Cook garlic until golden brown garlic. Drain on paper towels, set aside. To garlic add a pinch of salt and pepper.

In the same pan, add another tablespoon of oil. Add beef and cook until it changes color. Add Worcestershire sauce and season to taste.

Top beef with garlic, pour over pan drippings. Serve garnished with chopped flat leaf parsley.

Tips/options

Make sure garlic is chopped/sliced evenly to ensure that all morsels of garlic cook evenly and brown at the same time.

If using Bolos garlic, use quantity in half, as this garlic is stronger in taste and flavor.

Do not burn garlic.

If you will add 2 tsp Knorr seasoning, adjust to taste, after adding Worcestershire sauce.

If you can find sea salt, this would be great to season your beef with.

When beef changes color, just before it's done you may add a tbsp or so of butter. Mix to melt and blend!

Do this over high heat and in a hot pan. All you want is to sear the beef and not overcook it.

In the pan with the drippings add two cups of cooked cold rice, a few pieces of toasted garlic, a bit of olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Heat this through, mixing to combine. Serve rice with beef.

Can I please have a recipe for Kimchi and Cheddaring Maja Blanca?

CHRIS

Don't really know what you mean by scrambling. Hope this makes you [illegible] or, at least, eagle!

Tingle-ing Maja Blanca

3/4 c cornstarch
1 c white sugar
2 c coconut milk, from concentrate
2 c [illegible] milk
[illegible] of 2 pcs thyme

Combine [illegible] and cornstarch. Mix until combined.

Cook over low heat, whisking until mixture thickens.

Pour mixture into a dish or into molds.

Cool, top with [illegible].

You may add 1 cup cored corn to mixture for that crunch.

Kakang Kuta

(First extraction of coconut milk from concentrate)

In a saucepan, heat coconut milk stirring until oil is extracted and [illegible] is formed.

For questions and comments: [illegible]

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